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AN INQUIRY  
CONCERNING  
**THE BOSS FAMILY**  
AND  
**THE NAME BOSS.**

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN  
**WILLIAM GRAHAM BOSS,**  
Edinburgh, Scotland, and  
**HENRY RUSH BOSS,**  
Chicago, U. S. A.



CHICAGO:  
**THE BEN FRANKLIN COMPANY,**  
282 IRVING AVENUE.  
1902.

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO  
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JAN 17 1907



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# WISCONSIN HISTORICAL LIBRARY

## FOREWORD.

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*One day about the middle of the month of May, 1898, looking round an old bookstall in Leith Walk, Williamson's by name, I chanced on a bundle of odds and ends marked at the low price of twopence, and from a cursory examination of the bundle, thinking it might contain something of interest, I became the possessor. After making another purchase I hied me to my working den to weed the lot, and as it happened I consigned most of the twopence worth to the waste paper, including a copy of the Superior Printer, printed and published somewhere in America, and I thought I was done with superior printing, but at a leisurely moment, a few days after, on passing the waste box, this Superior Printer again caught my eye, and I looked over its pages more carefully than before, when behold an extract on "Reading Printers," from a magazine called The Ink Fiend, came into view, and, glancing over the paragraph, the name of my future correspondent, the printer of these*



*sheets, attracted my notice. I read the extract and—well, there was something about the sentences and matter which struck me, so that I made up my mind to write MR. H. R. BOSS, whose name I had stumbled on in this manner. For this purpose I rolled up the sheet, intending to take it home and have another look over it previous to writing. On the way home, when calling for my monthly magazine, I handed my superior printed treasure to the shopgirl to be rolled up therewith; but alas, on arriving home I found the precious sheet had slipped out of the roll by the way, and was now lost to me. So there was nothing left for me but to draw on my memory for the facts stated in my post-card as printed at page 9 of this volume.*

*Such is the history of my initiatory steps to the following imperfect letters of mine, put together at spare intervals, and begun without any intention of publication. And, although rather belated, I desire to thank the postoffice officials at Chicago for their courtesy in forwarding my post-card to MR. JAMES W. TURNER; to whom my thanks are also due for transmitting it to my friend. I also return thanks to all those who, though not numerous, have kindly furnished me with replies to my enquiries concern-*



*ing the name and its bearers, or who have given information about kindred matters.*

*For the satisfaction of the curious with reference to the illustrations, I may say that my great-grandfather's signature, at page 25, is from the subscribed copy of the Solemn League and Covenant, preserved in Queen Ann Street Church, Dunfermline, of which he was one of the original members, and where he filled the office of a deacon for about twelve years. And the other zincographs are from drawings by me, unless otherwise mentioned; they are left in outline to be coloured by hand if the possessor is so inclined.*

*Edinburgh.*

*W. G. B.*

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## PREFATORY.

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*The origination of this book is well told by MR. WILLIAM GRAHAM BOSS in his "Foreword." When I began the printing of these letters it was with the expectation that they would make a pamphlet of forty or fifty pages, and that they might be of interest to*



*the small number of members of the BOSS FAMILY of whom I then knew. The work, however, has exceeded my anticipations and grown into a book, and the discovery has been made that the Bosses are much more numerous, in all parts of this country, at least, than I had any idea of.*

*In the preparation of my part of this book I have been hampered by the indifference of many of whom I have sought information, who have utterly neglected to reply to my letters, and by the ignorance of many others who have never known, or have failed to remember, much of the family history. Lack of pecuniary means has prevented my having researches made in libraries and public offices in various parts of the country; and I have been forced to content myself with such information as I could obtain from meager sources.*

*If the present volume is successful in awakening a proper interest in the subject, and in making returns for the money I have expended upon it, it will be followed by one or more other volumes, which it is hoped will be of interest and value, and, possibly, result in tracing the history of the families of the three brothers who, I am persuaded, were the first of*



*the name to settle in this country, and in finding many of their descendants of the present day.*

*To those who have answered my queries, to many others who have aided by suggesting possible sources of information, and especially to MR. WILLIAM GRAHAM BOSS, who has contributed so much to this book, I return my hearty thanks.*

H. R. B.







*"Every family should have a family genealogist,  
\* \* \* \* \* It is extraordinary how  
often, even in pedigrees of ancient families, modern  
facts about cadets are despised. Regrets begin after  
the links are lost."*

*The Scottish Antiquary, July, 1901.*







**WILLIAM GRAHAM BOSS.**







## THE BOSS FAMILY---THE NAME, BOSS.

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*From William Graham Boss.*

[Postal-card, addrest: "Mr. —, the editor of 'The Ink Fiend,' or The Secretary of the Printing Trade in Chicago, U. S. America." Indorst: "If the P. O. at Chicago would kindly endeavour to hand this to the proper quarter, such a service would be esteemed with thanks.—W. G. B." Forwarded to James W. Turner, the last publisher of *The Ink Fiend*, at Lagrange, Ill., and by him sent to Henry R. Boss, Chicago.]

16 UNION STREET, EDINBURGH, SCOTLAND,

May 26th, 1898.

Dear Sir: Early in 1888, perhaps in the month of March or April, there appeared in a printer's trade journal, called *The Ink Fiend*, which was published in Chicago, a contribution on "Reading Printers," by a Mr. "Henry R. Boss." My object in writing this is to ascertain if you could kindly place me in communication with Mr. Boss, for the purpose of making enquiries with reference to his and my own name, as I am collecting information relating thereto. Although I have a number of cousins in U. S. A., I am not aware if this Mr. B. is one.

Should this reach Mr. Boss, perhaps he would kindly let me know at his convenience any traditional



account or otherwise of the name if he has ever heard anything. I may say that I am a native of Scotland and that the name is a very old one here. I am also aware that it is found in England, France, Germany, etc., but I can not say if in these countries the name had the same origin as in Scotland.

Thanking you in advance for any trouble which I may cause, I am      Yours faithfully,

WM. GRAHAM BOSS.

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*Henry R. Boss to William Graham Boss.*

[Letter.]

232 IRVING AVENUE,  
CHICAGO, ILL., July 28, 1898.

Mr. William Graham Boss.

Dear Sir: Your postal-card to the editor of *The Ink Fiend* (which publication expired five or six years ago) reached me some days since, and I take the first opportunity to reply to it.

If there is any relationship between us, it is so distant that we might as well be named Smith or Jones. As nearly as I have ever been able to trace my genealogy on my father's side, my great-great-grandfather (possibly *his* grandfather or great-great-



grandfather) was one of five brothers who emigrated to this country from Holland so long ago that I have no record of it. One settled in Connecticut, one in New York (State), one in Virginia and one in Pennsylvania; where the other went I have no means of knowing. My family record is as follows, so far as I know it:

Father, Henry B. Boss, b. in Saratoga County, N. Y., 1807; died in Forestville, N. Y., 1842.

Grandfather, William Garner Boss, b. 1776, d. 1836.

Great-grandfather, William Boss, d. 1801. [His wife, Silvia Boss, died September 1, 1819, "aged 74 years."]

Great-great-grandfather, Peter Boss. [This statement is based on tradition only.]

Farther than that I can not go, except I make an effort to search the records of Connecticut, Massachusetts (where some of the family settled) and other states. I believe that the state of New York never (until quite recent years) required records to be kept of births, marriages, etc. I have never had time or means—or very much inclination—to look the matter up. So far as I have ever been able to learn, none of the family has ever been in the penitentiary, or has ever been hung. We inherit from our ancestors, I hope, their sturdy integrity, but none of us have ever become famous.

The name Boss is a good Dutch word signifying "master," and the word is in common use in this country to designate a foreman, superintendent, etc. It is sometimes employed in an opprobrious sense, as



when applied to a selfish manipulator of partizan politics, as "Boss Croker," etc.\*

I am glad you have written on this subject, and I shall be glad to hear from you again. I was surprised at learning there were any bearing my name anywhere in the United Kingdom.

Very truly yours,      HENRY R. BOSS.

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*William Graham Boss to Henry R. Boss.*

[Letter.]

16 UNION STREET, EDINBURGH,  
August 11th, 1898.

Mr. Henry R. Boss, Chicago.

Dear Sir: Your letter of July 24th duly to hand.

As you say, and I agree with you, there is not likely to be any relationship between us, your forefathers having gone from Holland to America, unless they were sprung from a Scotch settler there; even in

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\*It is also frequently used as an adjective, denoting excellence. Some years ago, when my daughter was but a wee chick, I took her out for an afternoon walk. Seeing a sign, "The Boss Cigar Store," the little one said, "Pa, when they want to call anything good, they name it 'Boss,' don't they?"



this case, the relationship would be remote, however interesting to trace.

In the latter part of the sixteenth and during the seventeenth centuries there were a great number of Scotch in Holland, engaged in the wars principally, fighting on both sides; there are a number of families in France, Belgium, Holland, Germany, Russia, etc., who are descended from Scotch military adventurers of that and earlier times. There was also a considerable trade carried on between Scotland and the Low Countries from an early date, and this intercourse may have had an effect on the present form of my name, as my ancestors were settled in Fife, one of the chief counties from which trade was carried on, and during the seventeenth century there was quite a number of Dutch in that county; their descendants are found there at the present day. In one coast town—Dysart—there was a specially large number of them, and the town was known locally as “Little Holland.”

From enquiries which I have made so far, and from the tradition in our family, there is nothing to lead to the supposition that my ancestors came from Holland. The earliest mention which I have found in the county of Fife is in the year 1494, the name being spelt in the printed record “Bos;” the bearer was a “John Bos,” whom I find within a few miles of the district where my great-grandfather was a farmer. The name in the form “Boss” is not found in any



other part of Scotland until the early part of this century, and as far as I have gone back all the members were related.

My father was James Boss, 1802-1885.

My grandfather was William Boss, 1760-1839.

My great-grandfather was David Boss, 17\*\*-1789.

I am in the same position as you here, that I can not go any further back at present.

The characteristics of my family are very similar to yours, in that none of them have been famous or infamous, as far as I am aware. Apropos of characteristics: the real "Bosses" here are said to have grey eyes, and fair hair when children; of course there are some who have dark eyes, the effect of marriages; the usual height of male adults about five feet nine or ten inches. Has any observation been made of this in your family?

I believe the original form of my name was "de Bois;" in early Latin documents it is "de Boscho" and "de Bosco." The first appearance of them in Scotland is about 1170; and the spelling "de Bois," "de Boyes," etc. continued till the latter part of the fifteenth century, when the prefix "de" was dropped and the name was spelt "Boiss," "Boyes," "Boice," "Boas," "Bos," etc.; there are about three dozen varieties of spelling. I have not found out when my name was first spelt "Boss," but should suppose it to be about the latter part of the sixteenth or early in



the seventeenth century. There is a tradition in the family of a change having been made at some time in the spelling of the name.

There are so few of our name in Scotland that I thought it might be possible that you were descended from an early emigrant from this part of the globe. Two of my uncles emigrated to the States about 1830-40, and their families are now in various places there. My cousin Janet wrote me from Oswego some time since, and she mentioned that there are two firms of the name in New York, one inkmakers and the other watchcase-makers. Although my cousin has met people who knew them, she did not learn if they were of Scotch descent. Do you know if they are a branch of your family?

It is possible they may be Jews, as I came across a Jew, "Matthew Boss," in business in London.

With reference to the Dutch word "boss," I have referred to a dictionary, and the nearest I find is: "bos," a bunch, bundle, hank, truss, etc.; "bosch," wood, forest, etc.; "maastur," master. Boss is a well-known term here for master, in a slang sort of way, and is looked on as an Americanism.

I am yours faithfully,

WILLIAM GRAHAM BOSS.

French — Bosse, hunchback; bossu, humpback.

German — Bose, evil, wicked.

Scotch — Boss, hollow, empty, a small cask.



*William Graham Boss to Henry R. Boss.*

[Letter.]

EDINBURGH, 16 UNION STREET,  
Oct. 7th, 1898.

Mr. Henry R. Boss, Chicago.

Dear Sir: In my former letter I made no mention of the earliest members of my name who are on record as being settled in Fife. The earliest notice of them occurs in 1434—William de Boys, official of St. Andrew's, etc.; and Alexander Boys in 1438, who is bailie of Kirkcaldy in 1448; and in the same record\* there occurs a Henry de Boys, burgess of Kirkcaldy. Then in 1450 a David de Boys is vicar of Cleish, which, although not in Fife, is just next to it; and in 1462–64 David Boys, master of works to the Crown, and custumer of the salt customs at Dysart, where an extensive manufacture of this article was carried on for about three hundred years after this date; from very early times it was largely exported to the continent, Holland especially.

After 1464 I have not found the spelling "Boys" in Fifeshire, the forms after that date being "Boist," "Bos," "Bost," "Bowse," "Boost," etc.; and these forms are only found in Fifeshire or immediately adjoining parishes. The traditional account of the reason for the change in our name is that the spell-

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\*Register of Dumfermline Abbey.

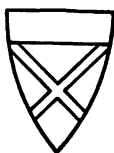


ing was altered to distinguish one branch of the family from another in the same neighborhood.

The Christian names, William, Alexander, David, Andrew, James, John, are found in use in our family as far back as I have traced them; and the Fife bearers of the surname are said to be descended from the family of Panbride in the adjoining county of Forfar, the origin of which family is given by Hector Boece in his *Chronicles of Scotland*, which he printed at his own expense, at the Ascensian press, folio, Paris, 1527; he says (about 1860):

*Inter cæteros proavus meus Hugo Boetius cujus pater ad Duplin occubuerat, Baro Drisdalæ ex regia beneficentia connubio conjunctus est virgini hæredi partis Baronatus Balbrid, quam etiam hac ætate quartus jam inde heres possidet.—Fo. cccxxv, ed. 1527; Fo. 323, ed. 1574.\**

The Barons of Dryfsdale were the earliest settlers of the name in Scotland, and



their arms were Argent a saltire and chief azure, which were also the arms of the Panbride branch,



who added a mullet in honour point for difference, to show descent from a younger

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\* The following is from the Scotch translation made for King James V about 1530: "Amang sindry othir that war rewardit at this time, Hew Boece, grandschir to Maister Hector Boece, compilar of the Cronikils, gat, in recompence of his faderis slauchter at Dupline, the heritoure and lady of the barony of Balbrid givin him in mariage; quhilk barony is yit possedit be the airis of the said Hew." (Note: The word "grandschir" is Scotch for great-grandfather.)



son. Probably the above Hugh would be third son of Sir Humphrey de Bois, who was killed in 1332.

Referring to the term "boss" as applied to a man of status, I find it in use here in the sixteenth century. John Knox, in his *History of the Reformation of Religion in Scotland*, which was written between 1559 and 1571, uses the word in this sense. To take one instance, under date of 1544, referring to a sermon preached by the Archbishop of Glasgow at Ayr to combat the doctrines of the Reformers, he says, writing in a derogatory connection: "The Archbishop preached to his jackmen and to some old bosses of the town."

I am inclined to think it is an English term as applied to a man of status or position, although it has almost passed out of our vocabulary, yet at the time of the colonization of America it would be in ordinary use and would be introduced there by the English emigrants.

I am yours truly,      W. GRAHAM BOSS.

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*Henry R. Boss to William Graham Boss.*

CHICAGO, November 5, 1898.

Mr. William Graham Boss.

Dear Sir: I am now convinced that what I wrote you, in July last, about the five Boss brothers who



came to this country and settled in different states, is erroneous, so far, at least, as any connection with my family is concerned.

In 1858 or 1859, — at which time I was publishing a newspaper in the western part of Illinois, — I had some correspondence with the late Daniel W. Boss, then a prominent railroad man in Chicago, in regard to our common name. Unfortunately, I have preserved none of that correspondence; but the following letter from an uncle of Mr. Boss settles the question as to any connection between that branch of the family and my own:

LEESBURG, Va., Feb. 28, 1861.

Mr. Henry R. Boss.

Dear Sir: I am in receipt of yours of February 25, and in reply: My father came from Germany, together with several brothers. One or two, I think, settled in New York or New-England States, one in Baltimore (Adam Boss), one in Norfolk, Va. (Christian Boss). My father's name was Peter Boss. I have (*sic*) several brothers, all dead, except one in Washington, D. C. — Abraham J. Boss. Daniel W. Boss, whom you refer to, is the son of my brother, Daniel C. Boss, dead some years since. My father died in 1818; my mother died in 1825. Daniel W. Boss' father, my brother, died some years since, in Pittsburg, where he lived. . . .

One of my brothers, Nicholas Boss, died when I was a child — say 1802 or 1803 — so long ago I do not remember him; he died, I think, in Pennsylvania.

We may be related, though I can not trace it out. As stated above, I had two or three uncles who remained north of the Potomac. . . .

Yours,

S. M. Boss.



The unearthing of this letter from S. M. Boss — I think his name was Samuel — first called attention to the error. Daniel W. Boss and I came to a hasty conclusion that we were connected through the five brothers referred to. I never gave the matter any farther attention until now.

The following is an extract from a letter in reply to one written by me to Mrs. Betsey (Jackson) Swift, of Forestville, N. Y., a granddaughter of my great-uncle, Peter Boss, — of whom more hereafter. I have every reason to believe it reliable. It was written by Mrs. Swift's granddaughter, Miss Marie Avery:

My grandmother seems to have had no fancy for remembering dates or for inquiring about the careers of even her most distinguisht ancestors; but my mother says that her grandmother\* used often to talk of her ancestry, and especially of the three brothers (the heads of this branch of the Boss family) who were navigators, and upon coming to America settled in New York, on the Mohawk,† receiving a deed of their land from the Indians, which was to be theirs "as long as grass grows and water runs." Mother did not realize of what great interest this would be to the Bosses of these later days, and so she either failed to learn the names of the three brothers, or has forgotten them; however she can vouch for the truth of the story — that is, it is just as her grandmother told it to her.

So it is doubtless true that my family came from one of three brothers who settled in the state of New

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\* Amy (Boss) Jackson.

† Whence the term "Mohawk Dutch."



York, and not from one of five brothers who scattered to different parts of the Union.

In a copy of "The Original Lists of Persons of Quality . . . and others who went from Great Britain to the American Plantations, 1600-1700," edited by John Camden Hotten, it is recorded that a ticket from Barbadoes was granted to

Whitehead Joseph, in the Ship *Three Brothers*, Peter Boss, Comand<sup>r</sup>. security.

Who knows but this Peter Boss was my great-grandfather?

In Volume I of "American Ancestry," publisht by Joel Munsell's Sons, Albany, N. Y., 1887, I find the following:

BOSS, LEWIS, Albany [N. Y.]; son of Samuel P. Boss, of Scituate, R. I.; son of Benjamin, b. 1759, d. 1849, served five years in Revolutionary war; son of Benjamin, b. 1727, son of Edward, b. 1685, d. 1752 (m., 1709, Philippa Carr), freeman, 1713; son of EDWARD BOSS (m. Susannah Wilkinson), settled in Narragansett, R. I., May 17, 1710, when he bought vacant lands sold by the Assembly; he died about 1724. The family is of Dutch origin. Name spelt Bosch and afterward Bos.

In "British Family Names," publisht in London, 1891, by Elliott Stock, is the following:

Boss. Fr., Bosse; D., Boss; G., Dch., Bos; p. n.

No further intimation than this is given — no inkling as to where, in England, any bearing this name may be found.

Yours very truly, HENRY R. BOSS.



*William Graham Boss to Henry R. Boss.*

EDINBURGH, 16 UNION STREET,  
November 21st, 1898.

Mr. Henry R. Boss, Chicago.

Dear Sir: Your letter of November 5th received. It is of great interest. After reading it perhaps I should have addressed you as "Cousin;" and after all I am strongly inclined to think that you are off the same stock as myself, as will appear by the following facts.

In the extract which you give from Miss Marie Avery's letter—the whole tenor of which extract is so like our tradition—your ancestors had a deed of lands from the Indians to be theirs "as long as grass grows and water runs." This is very remarkable. Is it not possible that the mention of "Indians" is an error introduced in the course of time through being transmitted orally from one generation to another? Of course, if such a deed is extant there can be no doubt about the matter.

Now it so happens that *this identical tradition, minus the "Indians," has been handed down in my family word for word, referring to a tenure of land for "as long as grass grows and water runs."* I have heard the same from my father, and also from my aunt, Jane Boss, and others—sometimes with this addition, that the lands were to remain in the family provided the descendants bore the name of "Boss," which may mean that, if the elder line ended in a



female, the next heir-male was to succeed; or it may mean that the husband of an heir-female should assume the name; but, however this may be, there is no doubt about the tradition. I will just remark further that I believe this phrase, "as long as grass," etc., to be a peculiarly Scottish one in old legal documents.

Another point which appears along with the foregoing to strengthen my opinion of relationship is the name of your great-grandfather, simply "William Boss," and the date of his death, 1801. He was contemporary with my great-grandfather, David Boss, who died in 1789; this just leaves twelve years between their deaths; probably your great-grandfather would be a younger brother; and again my grandfather was William Boss, born about 1760, died in 1889. Here comes in a good old Scotch custom of naming children after their parents and near relatives. In connection with this feature, although I made enquiries some time since I could not ascertain who my grandfather was named after. What would be more natural for my great-grandfather than to name one of his sons after his brother, or after the same man whom his brother was named for, whoever this may have been?

If you could ascertain the age of your great-grandfather when he died, it is possible his birth may be found in the registers here, although there have been great irregularities in keeping the parish registers. The names of his father and mother would



probably be entered also, thus taking us back another generation.

Another consideration which leads me to the same conclusion is, you mention that the three brothers are said to have been sailors. Well, my family have been inhabitants of the seacoast for many generations, and we know that a love for the sea is just like many other hereditary characteristics: it runs in the blood. When my father was a boy he was taken one or two voyages for the benefit of his health, to Holland and the Baltic, by his cousin, Captain Graham (son of Agnes Boss, or Graham), who traded to those parts. Then my uncle, David Boss, who settled in Oswego, U. S. A., was a ship-carpenter and sailed round the globe, I don't know how often, but he was on the sea most of his life. Then my grand-cousin, also David Boss, was a ship-carpenter; he stayed at Kincardine on Forth, here. Then my cousin, Captain William Burgess (probably named after his grandfather, William Boss), son of my father's sister, Margaret Boss, or Burgess, sailed between Liverpool and New York; he was lost with his vessel — the Anglo Saxon (steamer), I think was her name — while on a voyage to New York, about forty years ago, in the vicinity of Cape Race; his widow and family removed from Liverpool to her parents' home, in or near New York, after this disaster. (I am not aware if Mr. Gellet Burgess, author of "The Purple Cow," is a descendant or not.) Captain Burgess' brother Ralph is in business at Toronto.





HENRY RUSH BOSS.







As I have mentioned one disaster, perhaps in this place I may mention David Boss, my eldest brother, who, although not a sailor, was wrecked near Halifax, Nova Scotia, while on his way to Boston, about 1873, in the White Star Line steamship Atlantic; he was one of the few survivors of that disaster, and since then has been settled in Manitoba, Canadian N. W. There are a number of other cousins who were more or less connected with the sea; also a Captain John G. Boss, R. N., in the early part of this century, who may have come off the same stock, judging from circumstantial evidence; but I am enquiring.

In my family there are other traditions, which may be found in yours. Could you ascertain if there is anything said about the name itself, or anything about a change in the name, however unlikely it may appear to you, *the smallest scrap would be of service.*

If you could obtain a copy of your great-grandfather's signature it might show if he had been trained in the same school as mine, a copy of whose autograph I append, taken from a public document dated at Dumfermline May 29th, 1746. There are peculiar



characteristics in the hand, showing no little artistic taste. Look at the beautiful form of the letter B, for instance, or any of the letters. The writer appears to have been a man of superior taste; this is more



apparent in the original document, where the names are arranged in two columns on the page, this one being the center name in the second column, containing twenty-three names. The signature is distinctive in character and shows a man of capacity, which is borne out by facts. The signature also shows an inherited natural taste, and may be of interest to you, as it would probably be derived from the same sources as the members of your family may be indebted to for a part of their natural taste at least.

Also, if you could recover the name of your great-grandfather's wife\* and the names of their family, also the names of the other brothers and any of their children's names, it would help to show if there was any connection; and if you could ascertain their church connection it might show in which way they had been brought up. Do you know if any of them were Freemasons? I find four of my family members of St. John's Lodge, Dumfermline, between 1739 and 1792; one of them the above David, probably.

My great-grandfather was a Presbyterian, and seems to have taken an interest in the church questions of his time in Scotland—I am glad to say on the side of freedom and progress in these matters. His wife's name was Agnes Watt, and their family consisted of five sons and four daughters; as far as I

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\*All I have ever been able to learn of her was given in my letter of July 23, 1898. See page 11 of this work.

\*

H. R. B.



have learned, their names were David, James, John, William, Andrew, Agnes, Helen, Margaret, Isabell.

With reference to the lands which my forefathers are said to have possessed, I find lands in their neighborhood mentioned in 1587, called "Boys' Croft." This may be the lands referred to, or it may have been in another quarter; but I am enquiring as opportunity offers.

The Peter Boss, commander of the Three Brothers, may have been one of an earlier generation. I will try and see the work mentioned.

Returning to the history of our name in Scotland: All accounts agree in stating that it is of French origin, and that they came over at the time of the conquest of England in 1066, or shortly thereafter. The name Bois appears in most of the lists of the companions in arms of Duke William of Normandy which were compiled in his time or immediately after.

The earliest Scotch chronicle in which the name is mentioned is that of Sir Thomas Gray, written in the early part of the fourteenth century, while he was a prisoner in Edinburgh Castle. To quote from Hill Burton's History of Scotland, Sir Thomas Gray "tells how King William the Lion brought with him (1174-75), when returning to Scotland from his captivity,\* younger sons of the families to whom he was indebted for courtesies, and how he endowed them with lands.

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\* King William was taken prisoner by the English, in battle, and passed his captivity in England and Normandy.



We can not take the passage as precise statistics. We may get more from it by counting it as the shape into which the chronicler put the traditions of the migration of the great Norman houses to Scotland. In this view the list of names is instructive: . . . .

"Si estoient ceaux dez Baillolfs, de Bruys, de Soulis, et de Moubray, et les Saynciers, les Hayes, les Giffardis, les Ramesays, et Laundels; les Biseys, les Berkleys, les Walenges, lez Boysis, les Mountgomeries, lez Vaus, lez Colevyles, lez Frysers, les Grames, les Gourlays, et plusours autres."

Also Hector Bois\* in his Chronicle gives a similar list of names. In Volume II, page 281, edition 1821, after mentioning the names of those who came out of

Hungary, he says: "Mony othir surnames, be sindry chances of time, came out of France in Scotland; as Frasier, Sinclare, Boswel, Mowtray, Montgummary, Campbel, Boyis, Betown, Tailyefer, and Bothwel; with mony othir."

This list is also repeated by Sir David Lindsay, Lyon King of Arms, in his Scots Armorial, compiled about 1542; it is the oldest Scotch Armorial in existence and an official register cer-

*Red Boyis of Campbells of Ards*



Reduced copy, half the size of original.

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\* Commonly called Hector Boece.

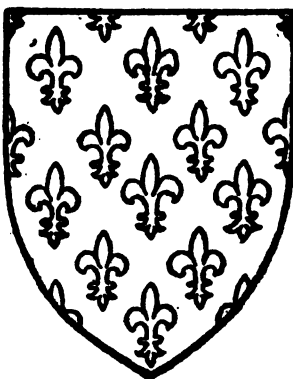


tified by act of Parliament. From the facsimile printed edition I send you a copy of the arms of "Lord Boyis of Dryvisdaill of Auld." Dryfsdale is situated in Dumfriesshire and takes its name from the Water Dryffe, which flows through it and is tributary to the River Annan, which gives name to Annandale. In these early times to which I have referred the Bruce family were Lords of Annandale, and the Bois family were among their feudal vassals; the Bois arms are the same as the Bruce, with a difference in color to distinguish them, and are what are called feudal arms. The arms of the Bruce family are blazoned, Or, a saltire and chief gules.

As bearing on the statement that the Bois family originally came from France there is the name in the original form. Then, why should the colour of the arms be white and blue? They could have been any other colour excepting those of the feudal superior.

On referring to the Berry Armorial de France, 1450, I find a family "de Boisi," or "Boissy," Ile de France, bearing arms of the same tinctures—blue and white, Azure semé of fleur de lis argent, as in the enclosed sketch. Also another family in France, at an earlier date, bearing the same arms—Bois-

DE BOISI OR BOISSY,  
*Ile de France.*  
Azure semé of fleur de lis argent.



BERRY ARMORIAL DE FRANCE.  
1450.



Glani, quarterly first and fourth Azure semé of fleur de lis argent, second and third Argent fretté gules—about 1425.

Then, to return to Scotland, we find, probably late in the twelfth or early in the thirteenth century, a Walter del Bois using a seal having a fleur de lis for the central figure.—Henry Laing's Catalogue of Ancient Scottish Seals, Volume II, 1866 :

No. 109, Walter Bois. A fleur de lis of a slender and elegant form, not on a shield. (Legend) "Sigil Walteri del Bois." Appended to a charter by Walter del Bois of three acres of land at Karruderes to St. Cuthbert's, Durham—Dean and Chapter of Durham.

Placing these facts together, and bearing in mind that it was a heraldic practice for younger sons, when they acquired a position for themselves, to adopt arms somewhat different from their fathers', in many cases taking other figures entirely, but retaining the paternal colours; in this light there is a strong probability that the colours, white and blue, of the Bois arms are derived from France, if not from the same family stock as Boisi—Ile de France.

In this letter I have mentioned lands called Boys' Croft, situated in the barony of Clackmannan, which was held by a branch of the Annandale Bruce family from about 1360 until about 1770. In the history of this family mention is made of the Boises of Dryfsdale having married daughters of the Bruces lords of Annandale. This is very probable, as it would be a means of mutual strength in the contests of those



times. The history of the name bears this out as far as I have seen, numbers of them serving the state in various positions before and after the Bruce family were advanced to the Scottish throne.

I am

Yours truly,

WILLIAM GRAHAM BOSS.

*Henry R. Boss to William Graham Boss.*

CHICAGO, June 30, 1899.

Mr. William Graham Boss.

My Dear Sir: Your reasoning in regard to our relationship, on account of the occurrence of similar given names in your family and mine, is ingenious, at least; and your theory on this point may secure some confirmation before we are done with this investigation. The names Andrew, David, Peter and William occur in my family, but that proves little in favor of your theory. The only Andrew I know of (Andrew J.) probably derived his name from the hero and President, Andrew Jackson, as his father was, I believe, a stanch Democrat and an admirer of "Old Hickory."

The "good old Scotch custom" of naming children after their parents and near relatives does not prevail in this country to the same extent as it does



with you, as can be seen in the case of my own family. The following are taken from the lists of names in my family Bible:\*

William G. Boss (my grandfather), b. May 18, 1776; m. Leah Storms Oct. 14, 1795; d. Sept. 19, 1836.

Leah (Storms) Boss, b. Feb. 4, 1779; d. Nov. 18, 1858.

Their children were:

Hiram Boss, b. Feb. 4, 1797 (on his mother's 18th birthday); m. Sarah Ann Rogers May 25, 1823; d. 18—.

David Boss, b. May 18, 1799; m. Eliza Swan March 18, 1823; d. at Lyons, N. Y., July 27, 1847.

William Boss, b. July 2, 1801; d. Aug. 15, 1819.

Melinda Boss, b. Sept. 14, 1803; d. July 18, 1805.

Selinda Boss, b. Aug. 8, 1805; m. John Keeler May 25, 1824; d. March 6, 1863.

Henry Ball Boss, b. May 6, 1807; m. Ann Adelia Dix June 24, 1834; d. May 18, 1842.

My grandfather's brother, Peter Boss (b. 1755, d. at Forestville, N. Y., 1812), married Catherine

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\*My family record, as I term it, consists of entries on the blank pages left for that purpose, between the Old and New Testaments, in a Bible "printed and published, wholesale and retail," at Saratoga Springs, N. Y., by G. M. Davison, in 1826. My grandmother and my father purchased this Bible, paying for it in cider. The earlier entries in it are in the bold, round hand of my grandfather, the last made by him being that of the marriage of his daughter Selinda, in 1824; then follow entries made by my father, the last being dated 1834; the next entries are in my mother's handwriting, while the later ones have been made by myself.



Storms (b. at Saratoga Springs, N. Y., 1778, d. at Forestville, N. Y., 1854), a sister of my grandmother, Leah (Storms) Boss. (They were said to be sisters of General Isaac Storms; but how or where he obtained his military title, or any other particulars in relation to him, I have never learned.\*) The children of Peter and Catherine Boss were:

Polly Boss, b. June 15, 1794; m. — Willoughby. Children: Maria, Peter, Wellington, Ann.

Eliza Boss, b. March 28, 1795.

Isaac Boss, b. Sept. 4, 1797. Children: Eliza, Hamilton, Henry Benjamin.

Ebenezer Boss, b. Nov. 7, 1799. Children: Leverett, Washington, Harry, Kate.

Amy Boss, b. Jan. 20, 1802; m. John Jackson. Children: Betsey (Swift), Mary Elizabeth, Eleanor Catherine.

Peter F. Boss, b. in Saratoga County, N. Y., July 4, 1804; m. Elizabeth Jones (b. at Litchfield, Conn., Dec. 3, 1816); d. at Mukwonago, Wis., Dec. 15, 1878. Children: Andrew J., Leander P., Caroline E., Katie E., Eva M.

George W. Boss, b. July 4, 1806. Children: Marjorie, Margret, Edgar, Hattie, Lizzie, Maria.

\*My cousin, Mrs. Annie (Boss) Newell, of Sheridan, N. Y., daughter of Alvin C. Boss, writes me: "I remember when I was very small my Grandmother Boss receiving company from Saratoga Springs—two brothers and their wives, named 'Storms.' They drove from their home in a double carriage, and Father drove to Fredonia after Aunt Leah, your [my] grandmother, to visit with them. They remained at our house about a week,—very intelligent people and interesting,—but we never heard from them again, as I remember." I have an indistinct recollection of this visit.



Alvin Cornell Boss, b. May 20, 1808; m. Laurentia Mal-lory (b. at Keeseville, N. Y.); d. 1875. Children: Sumner, Annie (Mrs. Oliver Newell), Jerome, Jennie, Frank W., Polly.

This great-uncle, Peter Boss, was buried on his own farm, near Forestville, N. Y. Forty-two years later, when his wife, Catherine, died, his remains were disinterred for removal to the village cemetery. The casket (in a good state of preservation), when opened, exposed his perfect form and features, even to a flush on his face, but the corpse immediately crumbled to dust on being exposed to the air.

The names I have given above coincide in part with those given by you; but they do not greatly aid your theory of relationship.

I presume that my father's middle name (Ball) was given him in honor of Rev. Eliphalet Ball, one of the early settlers of Ballston Spa, and after whom that now celebrated watering-place was named. This Mr. Ball, it is said, was a third cousin of President George Washington.

Of the traditions regarding the family I know but little, as I have been separated from my older relatives the greater portion of the time since I was about fourteen years of age. My father died when I was seven, and in my fifteenth year I left school and set out to make my own way in the world. Consequently I have heard very little of the traditions that probably were known even in the generation preceding mine. Now, nearly or quite all that generation have passed over to the great majority; and, unless the present



and younger generation have heard and preserved these traditions, they will probably remain forever unrecorded. I find it very difficult to secure replies to the few letters I have been able to write, and there are but few of my relatives on my father's side whose present whereabouts are known to me.

One of the traditions I have heard is to the effect that there are immensely valuable landed interests in New York City, belonging to the Boss family, which might be recovered if only the line of descent could be authentically traced. I have never given the matter any serious attention, believing the claim to be on a par with those in the celebrated "Anneke Jans" case, which seem to me to exist only for the enrichment of a few lawyers.

The phrase, "as long as grass grows," etc., is not necessarily Scotch, I think. If my memory serves me correctly, it was used in some of the transfers of lands by the Indians in the state of New York. It would seem to be an appropriate form to express an Indian's idea of "forever." Mrs. Betsey Swift insists that it was Indians who gave the deed referred to on page 20 of this work; she obtained the story from her grandmother, Catherine Boss.

As to physical characteristics I can not give you much information. My father and my Uncle Hiram were rather short, square-built men, say about five feet eight inches high. The sons of Peter Boss, however, were, most of them, tall and spare, nearly or quite six feet high; his daughter Amy, as I remember



her, was large and quite stout. Blue or gray eyes and brown hair have generally prevailed.

I know little or nothing of the religious connections of the earlier members of the family. I believe my grandmother, Leah Boss, was an Episcopalian, and some of her children were Universalists; while her sister, Catherine Boss, was a Baptist. Little can be predicated on this, however, as the early settlers in a new country, — as Western New York was then, — when churches were scarce, were apt to form such religious connections as they could, rather than such as they desired.

From a History of Saratoga County, N. Y., I learn that my grandfather held the office of collector of taxes of the town of Milton, being elected thereto in 1810 and 1811; and his son, my Uncle Hiram, was elected to the same office in 1826.

In a list of marriage licenses issued in the province of New York, compiled by the late Dr. Edward B. O'Callaghan, are the following. Dr. O'Callaghan gives the volumes and pages of the books where these are recorded, and a copy of his work is in the Public Library of Chicago:

- 1778, July 11. Boss, Betty, and John Titley.
- 1735, July 20. Boss, Elizabeth, and John Parsall.
- 1772, August 31. Boss, Jacobus, and Mary Miller.
- 1761, April 21. Boss, Sarah, and Lawrence Harmon.
- 1758, Sept. 8. Boss, Susannah, and Simon Losse.

In response to my inquiry regarding the above, I have received the following letter from Mr. Arnold



J. F. van Laer, sub-librarian having charge of manuscripts in the New York State Library. The variations in names are as they appear in the records :

ALBANY, N. Y., June 28, 1899.

Henry R. Boss, Esq.

Dear Sir: In reply to your inquiry of the 17th inst., I will copy what information can be obtained from the marriage bonds which you indicated.

Vol. xxv, p. 124. John Titley and Peter Vanderburgh of New York bound themselves for the sum of £500 on the 11th of July, 1778. John Titley obtained a license for himself of the one party and Betty Boss of New York, spinster.

Signatures: John Titley, John Van der Burgh.

In the presence of J. Moore.

The earliest records of licenses are in the form of a list giving only the names of the contracting parties and the date of issue.

Vol. i, p. 2. 20 July, John Parsall and Elizabeth Boss.

Vol. viii, p. 166. Lawrence Harmen of the city of New York, mariner, and George Furman of said city, carpenter, the 21th of April, 1764. Lawrence Harmen obtained a license for himself of the one party and Sarah Boss of the city of New York, spinster.

Signatures: Lawrence Hardman, G. Furman.

No witness given.

Vol. xix, p. 37. Henry I. Sleight of Ulster County, mariner, and Laurence Kilbrun of the city of New York, merchant, the 31st of August, 1772. The above bounden obtained a license for Jacobus Boss of Ulster County, blacksmith, of the one party, and Mary Miller of said county, spinster.

Signatures: Hend. I. Sleight, Laurence Kilbrun.

In the presence of Jno. Grumly.

Vol. ii, p. 11. Simon Lossee of the city of New York, mason, and Teunis Thew of the same city, mariner, the 8th of



September, 1758. The above bounden Simon Lossee obtained a license for himself of the one party and Susannah Boss of New York, widow.

Signatures: Simon. <sup>his</sup><sub>mark</sub> Lossee, Theunis Thew.  
In the presence of J<sup>no</sup>. Gadby.

The names of the various husbands do not appear in our Revolutionary records, so that the above is all the information I believe, I can give you.

Respectfully yours,

ARNOLD J. F. VAN LAER,  
Sub-Librarian Manuscripts.

Mr. van Laer kindly adds the following information from the "Clinton Papers," in the State Library:

April 17, 1778—No. 1299: "The Evidence of Joseph Gordens is as follows: . . He says he heard Francis Elswert and Joseph Gooding—both of Shohawken—Say that they would Come about five Weeks hence with the Indians and Tories to take all the Wigs at Cashithtown, namely, . . . And the persons which would not be hurt, that were King's men, viz., Joseph Boss, . . ."

July 11, 1780—No. 8150, p. 79: "Nicholas Boss, of Capt. Vandeburgh's company, Charged with Disobedience of orders in the Late alarm. Pleads that he has no shoes & says he is under Recognizance to appear before the Commissioners once a Month & Recons it hard to serve two Masters. . .'

No place or age is mentioned.

Mr. van Laer adds:

Since so many different spellings of the name occur, and as it seems probable that the family came from Holland, I might mention here that our Dutch records contain a paper dated 6 December, 1646, showing that Jan Willemsen Bos, carpenter, built a house for Dirk Holgers, on Long Island.



In another letter Mr. van Laer gives the following information concerning the term "boss:"

The Dutch for master is Baas, which is pronounced by country people, and the lower classes generally, quite broadly, somewhat like Boss, and has in this way become incorporated under that form in the English language. Bos and Bosch are very common in Holland, and are found among all classes and conditions of people.

Some time ago I received the following letter from Mr. Robert P. Boss, of Boston, Mass. Sad to relate, Mr. Boss' pleasure trip was transformed into a journey of sorrow, by the death of his wife, a few days after leaving home. Mr. Boss is troubled with an affection of his eyes, which interferes with his reading or writing; but he has promised me that, when he shall have recovered therefrom, he will assist in our investigation:

Boston, April 19, 1899.

Mr. Henry R. Boss.

Dear Sir: . . . As I am due to go away on a trip South, to be gone two weeks, I can not enter into any extended correspondence now; but, when I return, will endeavor to give you all the data I possess.

The family has all the characteristics that W. G. Boss mentions, and in appearance they are apparently the same as ten generations ago.

The first Edward Boss\* (my progenitor) is supposed to have come from Holland; was married to Susannah Wilkinson, about 1770, in Providence, R. I. As near as I can make out,

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\*See notice of Lewis Boss, page 21. Also see list of the American descendants of Edward Boss, on pp. 50 *et seq.*



they were both Quakers; they were both buried from the Quaker church in Providence on the same day; the date I do not remember, but have it at home. Will give you facts later. The Christian names are Edward, William, Peter, Joseph, John. Nicholas. Our branch for several generations has been located in Newport, R. I., where I was born.

Hoping we may in the future evolve something in the family line more satisfactory, I am

Yours truly, R. P. Boss.

PS. I had two uncles, Joseph and John, and an aunt who married a Bliss, who settled in Genesee County, N. Y., over fifty years ago.

My friend, Andrew J. Mouat, a master-printer of this city, claims kinship with you, thru his mother, Mrs. Laurence Mouat, née Elizabeth Boss.

Her father was Andrew Boss, 1806-65; m. Jean Nicol.

Grandfather, William Boss; m. Margaret Graham. These were your grandparents also.

Great-grandfather, David Boss, b. in the early part of the eighteenth century; m. Agnes Watt.

The following of the other children of Andrew and Jean (Nicol) Boss are now living in this country: William, at Emerald Grove, Wis.; Alexander, near Independence, Iowa; David, at Pomona, Cal.; Jean (Mrs. S. J. Safford), at Augusta, Kan.

I thank you for the suggestion as to the Masonic connections of the members of the family. Perhaps, if I can find *where* to write, I can obtain some information that will be of value. I have been told that my grandfather, William G. Boss, was a Royal Arch Mason (as I am myself), and that my uncle, Hiram





**LEAH (STORMS) BOSS.**

Born February 4, 1779; died November 18, 1858.







Boss, was a Master Mason. My great-uncle, Peter Boss, was also a Mason, and his Masonic apron is in the possession of his grandson, Andrew J. Boss, of Mukwonago, Wis.

This letter is of a desultory, almost fragmentary, character; but I trust the information here recorded will afford us clues to more important discoveries.

Hoping to hear from you soon, I remain

Yours very truly,            HENRY R. BOSS.

*William Graham Boss to Henry R. Boss.*

EDINBURGH, 16 UNION STREET,  
August 14th, 1899.

Mr. Henry R. Boss, Chicago.

Dear Sir: Your letter of the 30th June to hand, which contains many facts of interest; and it is historically valuable to learn how your great-uncle was buried on his own farm. I suppose that the country would be sparsely peopled at that time.

Judging from the name of your great-grandmother, — Silvia, — which is by no means common here, I should think that, even supposing that her husband, William, was born in this country, it is probable they were married in America; and it would be in the names of the first generation born there that we



might expect to find the greatest agreement with the names of the contemporary generation here.

Perhaps it is true the legal phrase, "as long as grass grows," etc., may not be exclusively Scotch, but it was used here to denote a perpetual holding, and the tradition in our family here, in the latter part of the last century and early part of the present one, was that they held lands under this form, and the family had been settled in the western district of Fifeshire for about four hundred years. This coincides very nearly with the earliest mention of the name in contemporary local records (see page 16), the form of the name at that time being "de Boys" in the record. Then we have the tradition that the name was altered to its present form to distinguish one branch of the family from another. The story handed down from one generation to another, with reference to this, is, that two members of the family, probably cousins, had the same christian name, and they were near neighbours; so it came about, in the course of affairs, that the one was mistaken for the other and used to receive letters, etc. which were for the other, and vice versa. To put an end to the inconvenience which this caused it was agreed that my ancestor should take the spelling which we have continued to use to the present; which spelling renders the common pronunciation very well, being a long, soft syllable, the *o* having a sound like *oa* in oak. We are the only family in Scotland who use this form of the name, and it has been a common saying among



us that we are all related, although there are not so many of the name here at present compared with the numbers about sixty years ago; even then it was a small group. They seem to have gone in for emigrating largely in comparison with their numbers.

There are other branches of the name in Fifeshire which I believe are sprung from the same stock, although the connection has been lost, such as the names Bowes, Bowsie, Bousie, Buist; these differences originated in some instances in a similar way as in our family; the family of Bowsie have a similar story accounting for the difference from Bousie; and the practice of making a difference in the spelling was just borrowed from the heraldic practice of making a difference in the armorial bearings of cadets of a family—the arms were retained with a difference to distinguish them; equally the name was retained with a difference in spelling. At the time our change was made this would be much better understood than at the present day, when heraldic usage is understood only by the few.

But to return to your letter: Apart from the Indians having no written language, and the terms of the deed being in English, it would be doubly interesting to find your ancestor when he contracted with the savages for the lands, getting the form, "as long as grass grows," etc., inserted in the document. Perhaps he thought of what he had heard at home in the old country, and had an idea of settling down under his own vine and figtree and perpetuating the ancient



usage in the New World. I wonder what he called his new possession: would it also be an echo of home memories, some name familiar to him from his childhood, with all its fresh, unsullied associations and endearments? or would it be a presage of a new and better state and changed conditions of life?

Mention is made at page 20 that your ancestors settled on the Mohawk. I find from E. H. Roberts' New York, Commonwealth Series, page 415, that the farmers of the Mohawk Valley, at the time of the Revolutionary War, were mostly German and Low Dutch by blood, with a few English, Scotch and other nationalities, whose names are on the roster. If this could be referred to, perhaps your ancestor might be found among them.

The extracts from the state records are of much interest. The earliest one, July 20, 1735, containing the name Elizabeth, is noteworthy, as this name is found here in 1755, when James Boss, my great-grandfather's brother, has a daughter baptized by this name. It is curious to find a Jacobus or James married to a Mary Miller in 1772; the Latin form of his name may have been due to a whim of the Recorder. I have not found any of the others in our family, and of course the above are common names. Evidently Susannah bore her late husband's surname.

There can be no doubt of the name "Bosch" being common to natives of Holland, just as "Wood" is very plentiful as a surname in English-speaking countries. Although I can not point to any particu-



lar member of my family who settled in Holland, it would be strange if there were none, considering the great intimacy which existed for centuries between the two countries and my family having been settled for so many years in the trading district of Scotland nearest to Holland. There is an instance of a descendant of the Panbride family having apparently settled in Amsterdam. I find, from the Spalding Club extracts from the Burgh of Aberdeen Records, a John Boys, about twenty-three years of age, "at present in Amsterdam," son of Thomas Boys, Treasurer, receives a grant of a birth-certificate, under the burgh seal, in 1674. If he left descendants there, possibly they would conform the name to the usage of the country.

The name has a great variety of spellings in records here. Before there was any fixed rule, every scribe appears to have been a law unto himself in this respect, to some extent. I gather from the records that the common pronunciation has not altered for centuries. This is apparent as early as 1494 (see page 18), where the record, as was usual, gives the abbreviated form "Bos," which has sometimes been mistaken for an abbreviation of the name Boswell; shortly it represents the common broad monosyllable in speech. This is borne out by a reference to Hector Bois' History, a quotation from the Scotch version of which I have given at page 28, where the spelling is "Boysis." The same passage in the original Latin edition of 1527, as written by the author, has the spelling "Boas," which indicates that the common



pronunciation was just much the same as at present, and it also shows the author to have been perfectly aware of how his countrymen pronounced his name, although the spelling in documents varied greatly.

In the National Manuscripts of Scotland, edited by Colonel Sir Henry James, is given a facsimile of an ancient manuscript having this inscription on the margin at the bottom of the page :

*Collegii aberdonensis ex dono Magistri Hectoris  
Bois primi Primarii eiusdem.\**

Probably this was written by the librarian before or about 1585, the year in which the donor died, as I find from the seal of the Panbride family in 1505 (of which family the Principal was a son), the spelling of the name is "Boies." I believe this form is more peculiar to Dumfriesshire, and it serves as a connecting link for the Panbride family with the parent house of Dryfsdale, as mentioned at page 17.

The forms Boas, Boss, Boes, Bowes, Foece, are all monosyllables, and the last one appears to have been first been made use of by Ballenden in his translation of the Chronicles out of the Latin into Scotch, about 1586, and he knew quite well that this form which he adopted for the author's name was just giving typographical form to the popular usage of the name. It has been remarked by a writer, in reference to the form Boece, that it is not likely to have

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\* The property of the College of Aberdeen, by the gift of Master Hector Bois, first Principal of the same.



ever been actually borne by anyone of the name. I agree with this, as I have not seen it as a personal name in any other work or record. Nevertheless it is a very felicitous rendering representing the common pronunciation.

Another noteworthy feature is that these monosyllabic forms retain this characteristic of the original name "Bois;" and it is remarkable that the common lingual utterance of the people of the eastern lowlands has also preserved this feature through the centuries to the present day; where the letter *i* is silent in the spoken name, thus it came in the course of time to be written, in the eastern lowlands, without that letter.

In the southwestern parts of Scotland I believe the form Boyes is the only one prevalent, and is pronounced as two syllables — Boy-es. The Irish form, again, is said to be of one syllable, written Boyce. The forms Bowsie and Bousie are of two syllables, and are peculiar to the East Neuk of Fife, just as my own name was originally of western Fife. The forms Boiss, Boys, Boyss, with many other varieties, are only found in records.

At the present time among the middle classes the pronunciation of my name takes a somewhat smart form, the *o* partaking of the sound of the same letter in "shot," or at other times approaching the sound of letter *a* in "Bass."

I find that, with some people who hear my name for the first time, I am taken for a German or a Dutch-



man. May not a similar thing have happened with some bearers of the name in America, and, in the absence of sufficient evidence to the contrary, the assertion or assumption has been put into print and taken for gospel? In my own case I have had occasion to put people right on this score.

" . . . what time hath blurred,  
Redeem truth from his jaws."

The following are a few words which are or have been in ordinary use in Scotland, having the same pronunciation in common speech as my name, and which probably have given rise to the influence which has settled the name into its present spelling :

A boss window — Probably a bow window.

Old bosses — Later equivalents, old fogies, bigwigs, governors.

Boss, Boce — Hollow.

Bos, Boiss\* — A cask.

Bossie — A small wooden dish.

Bost, Buest, Boase, Boist,\* Boiss\* — A box or chest.

Bosslock — Probably a doorlock made almost entirely of wood.

Bossheid (Bosshead) — The iron hollow receptacle fastened to the standard of a doorway to receive the lock-bolt, etc.

Boysis\* — Bilboes, fetters.

A Bosen, or a Boss — Is a three-sided wooden framework, about seven feet in height, formed like a miniature spire, used by farmers for placing in the center of grain-stacks, forming a hollow for ventilation.

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\*The i and y silent.



**Boss, Boce** — An architectural ornament in use early in the medieval period to the present time, and familiar to architects, masons, carpenters, etc.

I am indebted to a local antiquary for the following list of Masonic brethren who have long passed away to their reward. Let us hope that they lived lives that were ensamples to their immediate posterity and brethren :

*St. John's Lodge, Dunfermline, No. 26.*

Andrew Boss, mason in Balingry, entered in 1739.

David Boss, no designation, entered in 1764.

John Boss, no designation, entered in 1764.

David Boss, mason in Dunfermline, entered in 1792.

Faithfully yours,

WM. GRAHAM BOSS.

CHICAGO, ILL., October 28, 1899.

**Mr. William Graham Boss.**

My Dear Sir: Your letter is very interesting in regard to the pronunciation of the name Boss. With us, the *o* has the sound of *oa* in the word broad, or of *au* in haul, the name rhyming with moss.

Mr. Robert P. Boss, of Boston, has redeemed in handsome manner the promise made in his letter of April 19 last. I am indebted to him for the following information concerning the American descendants of



Edward Boss, of whom mention has been made on pages 21 and 39 of this work. Tho I feel almost convinced that this branch of the family has no connection with mine, I have sent you a copy of the record and give it here in full, that we may have it for reference, especially in case my investigations should develop any relationship with the Edward Boss branch:

#### AMERICAN DESCENDANTS OF EDWARD BOSS.

##### FIRST GENERATION.

(1) Edward Boss, of South Kingston, R. I. b. Germany or Holland, 1651. d. Aug. 12, 1724, in South Kingston, R. I. m. Susannah Wilkinson of Providence, R. I. (a great-aunt of Jemima), who was b. Feb., 1662, and d. Aug. 15, 1724. They were both Quakers. Her mother was Susannah Smith (d. 1692), wife of Lawrence Wilkinson of Providence, R. I. (d. Aug. 9, 1692), and dau. of Christopher Smith of Providence, R. I. (d. 1676), and his wife Alice (d. 1681).

##### SECOND GENERATION.

(2) Edward Boss, of Newport, R. I. b. Jan. 20, 1685, in Newport, R. I. d. Dec. 25, 1752. m. Phillis Carr of Canacut or Jamestown, R. I., April 20, 1709. She was b. Dec. 8, 1688, of Caleb Carr of Jamestown, R. I. (d. 1690), and Phillis Greene of Warwick, R. I. (b. Oct. 7, 1658, d. before 1706). Caleb Carr was son of Robert Carr of Newport, R. I. (b. 1614, d. 1681). Phillis Greene was dau. of John Greene Jr. (b. 1620, d. Nov. 27, 1708) and Ann Almy (b. 1627, d. May 17, 1709). John Greene Jr. was son of John Greene of Warwick (b. 1597, d. 1658) and Joan Tattersall. Ann Almy was dau. of William Almy and his wife Audry.

(3) Jeremiah Boss, of Westerly, R. I. b. about 1697. d. about 1774. m. Martha Spencer of Exeter, R. I., March 22, 1722, who was b. Sept. 8, 1700, and d. 1774. She was



dau. of Robert Spencer of North Kingston (b. Nov. 6, 1674, m. July 15, 1697, d. 1748) and Theodosia Whaley of Kingston. Theodosia was dau. of Theophilus Whaley of Kingston, thought to be the regicide judge (b. 1616, d. about 1720), and Elizabeth Mills (b. 1645, d. 1715). Robert Spencer was son of John Spencer (d. 1684) and his wife Susannah (d. April 12, 1719).\*

#### THIRD GENERATION.

##### Children of (2) Edward Boss.

- (4) Mary Boss. b. Sept. 1, 1710. d. —
- (5) Freelove Boss. b. 1712. d. 1791.
- (6) Abigail Boss. b. 1715. d. 1715.
- (7) Edward Boss. b. 1716. d. —
- (8) Hannah Boss. b. 1719. d. 1732.
- (9) Susannah Boss. b. 1720. d. —
- (10) Joseph Boss, of Newport, R. I. b. Jan. 30, 1722. d. Aug. 14, 1807. m. Elizabeth Linscom of Newport, R. I., Aug. 8, 1756, who was b. in Brandon, Ireland, in June, 1725, and d. Sept. 24, 1807. She was dau. of James Linscom of Newport (b. 1700, d. Oct. 17, 1753).
- (11) Unnamed child. b. 1724. d. same day.
- (12) Phillis Boss. b. 1725. d. 1728.
- (13) Benjamin Boss. b. 1727. d. 1824.
- (14) Unnamed child. b. 1729. d. same day.

##### Son of (3) Jeremiah Boss.

- (15) Peter Boss, of Richmond, R. I. b. Sept. 30, 1732. d. —. m. Sarah Gardiner, or Gardner, of South Kingston,

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\*The *Narragansett Historical Register*, in a list of births in the town of Charlestown [R. I.?], has the following: "Children of Jeremiah and Martha Boss, 1724-1735: Richard, Edward, Susannah, Jeremiah, Martha, Peter, Joseph, John and Hannah." Query: Can these be the Jeremiah and Martha Boss referred to above?



R. I. (b. April 29, 1736), dau. of Caleb Gardiner of South Kingston and Isabel Sherman of Kingston (b. April 9, 1719, m. Feb. 20, 1734). Isabel was dau. of Dorcas Gardiner and Abiel Sherman of Kingston (b. Oct. 15, 1684, m. Oct. 20, 1712). Abiel was son of Sampson Sherman of Portsmouth (b. 1642, m. March 4, 1675. d. Jan. 27, 1718) and Isabella Tripp of Portsmouth (d. before 1718). Sampson S. was son of Phillip Sherman of Portsmouth and Sarah Odding. Isabella Tripp was dau. of John Tripp of Portsmouth and Mary Prime.

## FOURTH GENERATION.

Children of (10) Joseph Boss.

(16) William Boss, of Newport, R. I. b. Feb. 24, 1767. d. —. m. Edith D. Prior of Newport, R. I., Sept. 22, 1793, who was born April 23, 1773.

(17) John Linscom Boss, of Newport, R. I. b. May 6, 1757. d. Aug. 7, 1824. m. Sarah Boss of Richmond, R. I., his second cousin, Feb. 21, 1779.

Child of (15) Peter Boss.

(18) Sarah Boss of Richmond, R. I. b. March 14, 1758. d. Sept. 22, 1841 or 1844. m. John Linscom Boss of Newport, R. I., her second cousin, Feb. 21, 1779.

## FIFTH GENERATION.

Children of (16) William Boss.

(19) Eliza Linscom Boss. b. Aug. 10, 1794. d. —

(20) Christopher Prior Boss. b. May 20, 1796. d. —

(21) William Davis Boss of Newport. b. April 10, 1799. d. March, 1883. m. Eliza D. Stall (b. Jan. 10, 1799. d. about 1836 or 1837). m. Eliza M. Ambrose of Newport, R. I., Dec. 30, 1838 (b. Sept. 7, 1811. d. April 24, 1863).

(22) Martha Dickinson Boss. b. Nov. 20, 1797. d. —

(23) Thomas L. Boss. b. April 28, 1801. d. —

(24) Sarah P. Boss. b. June 1, 1802. d. —

(25) Robert P. Boss. b. Feb. 21, 1804. d. —

(26) Charles Boss. b. Aug. 26, 1805. d. —



(27) John Henry Boss. b. Aug. 22, 1806. d. —. m. Hannah — June 3, 1826 (b. Nov. 29, 1808. d. Feb. 4, 1888).

(28) Abby Boss. b. April 19, 1808. d. —

(29) Philip Martin Boss. b. Jan. 19, 1810. d. —

(30) Charles Dickinson Boss. b. March 27, 1812. d. —

(31) Joseph Boss. b. Dec. 10, 1813. d. —

(32) Catherine Gardener Boss of New York City. b. March 20, 1816. d. —

Children of (17) John Linscom Boss.

(33) John Linscom Boss. b. Sept. 7, 1780, at Charlestown. d. Aug. 1, 1819.

(34) James Boss. b. March 27, 1784, at Newport, R. I. d. March 4, 1805, at Berlin.

(35) Joseph Boss. b. March 29, 1785, at Newport, R. I. d. Sept. 11, 1814, at Halifax.

(36) Eliza Boss. b. Jan. 26, 1790, at Newport. d. Oct. 2, 1790.

(37) Unnamed child. b. April 24, 1792. d. same day.

(38) Philip Martin Boss. b. Aug. 1, 1794, at Newport. d. Jan. 26, 1810.

(39) Harriet Boss of Newport, R. I. b. July 12, 1797, at Newport. d. Nov. 21, 1887. m. Dutee Jerauld Pearce of Newport, R. I., Dec. 2, 1829. He was born April 2, 1789; d. May 9, 1849, and was the son of Samuel Pearce and Hannah Jerauld. He m. as first wife Abigail C. Perry, April 3, 1811, who d. July 4, 1827. Dutee Jerauld Pearce was United States district attorney 1812, attorney-general 1819–1825, member of Congress 1825–1837, presidential elector 1821, 1825, 1848.

(40) Nichols Gardner Boss. b. Jan. 8, 1799, at Newport. d. Nov. 17, 1836.

(41) Joseph Elliot Boss. b. March 6, 1801, at Newport. d. March 5, 1886.

#### SIXTH GENERATION.

Children of (21) William D. Boss and Eliza D. Stall.

(42) Isaac S. Boss. b. April 11, 1823. d. —



- (43) Nancy B. Boss. b. Oct. 18, 1825. d. —
- (44) Abby S. Boss. b. Dec. 15, 1827. d. —
- (45) William D. Boss. b. March 22, 1830. d. —
- (46) William D. Boss. b. Jan. 6, 1832. d. —
- (47) Charlotte E. Boss. b. March 25, 1834. d. —
- (48) Robert P. Boss. b. Feb. 20, 1836. d. —

Children of (21) William D. Boss and Eliza M. Ambrose.

(49) Robert Prior Boss. b. Saturday, Jan. 11, 1840, at 4:15 a. m. m. Clarissa P. Pearce of Newport, R. I., Sept. 1, 1861 (b. Dec. 23, 1842, d. May 7, 1899). She was the dau. of Benjamin W. Pearce of Swansey, Mass. (b. April 9, 1819, m. Aug. 2, 1841) and Clarissa Carpenter of Rehoboth, Mass.

(50) William Ambrose Boss. b. Saturday, March 26, 1842, at 4 p. m.

(51) Charles Edwin Boss. b. Sunday, Jan. 7, 1846, at 4 a. m. d. —

(52) Edith Prior Boss. b. Saturday, Oct. 25, 1851, at 4 p. m. d. —

Children of (27) John Henry Boss.

(53) Stephen P. Boss. b. Aug. 21, 1828. d. —. m. May 22, 1851.

(54) Edward J. Boss. b. May 7, 1830. d. Sept. 3, 1832.

(55) Abby J. Boss. b. Oct. 1, 1833. d. —. m. Feb. 1, —

(56) Mary C. Boss. b. Nov. 11, 1835. d. Feb. 6, 1883

(57) John H. Boss. b. Dec. 19, 1837. d. June 18, 1872. m. Feb. 13, 1864.

(58) Lucy L. Boss. b. July 19, 1840. d. —. m. March 15, 1864.

(59) Hannah E. Boss. b. Oct. 11, 1842. d. —

(60) Thomas E. Boss. b. Aug. 18, 1845. d. March 19, 1862.

(61) Timothy D. C. Boss. b. Nov. 22, 1848. d. —. m. Jan. 11, 1879.

(62) Serens J. Boss. b. Oct. 14, 1851. d. —. m. May 25, 1890.



Child of (39) Harriet (Boss) Pearce.

(63) Dutee Jerauld Pearce Jr., of Newport, R. I. b. July 27, 1833. d. —. m. Martha Palmer of Taunton, Mass., June 11, 1862. She was the dau. of Stephen J. Palmer and Martha Hawkins, and was b. Nov. 15, 1842.

SEVENTH GENERATION.

Children of (49) Robert Prior Boss.

(64) Carrie Burnett Boss. b. May 15, 1862, at Newport, R. I.

(65) Nellie Ambrose Boss. b. March 4, 1865, at Newport, R. I.

(66) Edward L. Boss. b. Aug. 30, 1875, at Boston, Mass.

In regard to the first Edward Boss, mentioned above, I glean the following additional information from Austin's Genealogical Dictionary of Rhode Island, published by Joel Munsell's Sons, Albany, N. Y., 1887:

He and seventeen others bought seven thousand acres in Narragansett of the vacant lands ordered sold by the Assembly. September 22, 1724, administration on his estate granted to his son, Edward Boss, of Newport. January 11, 1725, the Town Council ordered that Edward Boss, the eldest son of deceased, should have the land, he paying proportional sums to brothers and sister. [According to the foregoing genealogical record, this Edward Boss had but one brother and no sister.] September, 1725, suit was brought by Henry Knowles Jr. and Susannah, his wife, daughter of Edward Boss, deceased, against Edward Boss, of Newport, for £140, due for a fifth of the homestead of 154 acres. It was declared that Edward Boss died about August, 1724, leaving three sons, Edward, the eldest, Jeremiah and Peter, and one daughter, Susannah. In the inventory of the estate of Edward Boss is one "negro Abram, £60."



It is also stated that the second Edward Boss married *Philipp*[a?] Carr. Their children: Mary, Freelove, Abigail.

I have been "nosing around" among the books in one of our libraries, and have picked up a number of scraps of information. Tho they are of a fragmentary character, they are worth recording here, and it is possible they may, at some time or another, make connecting links in the chain we are trying to form:

In the Register of the Old Dutch Church of Kingston, N. Y., I find the following. The variations in the names of persons and places are "according to copy," and suggest how easy it would be to transform "Bos" or "Bosch" into "Boss:"

#### MARRIAGES.

Dec. 6, 1711 — Jacobus Bos, "young man," and Eyke Van der Merke, "young woman," both residing in Mormel [Marbletown].

June 24, 1726 — Dirk Bosch, b. in Mormel, and Antjen de Lange, b. in Kingstown, and both residing under the jurisdiction of Mormel.

1728 (date not given) — Johannes Bosch, b. in Mormel, and Marytjen van Etten, widow of Cornelius Ennis, b. in Horly [Hurley], and both residing in Mormel. Banns registered on April 21.

1728 (date not given) — Johannes Kleyn, widower, and Angenietjen Bosch, both residing in Nieuw-Mormeltown [New Marbletown].

May 13, 1728 — Benjamin Ekerly, b. on Lange Eyland [Long Island], and Styntjen Bosch, b. in Mormel.

1735 (date not given) — Thomas Moor, b. in Lisebeton [Elizabethtown], and Maria Bosch, b. in Mormel, and both residing there. Banns registered Feb. 2.

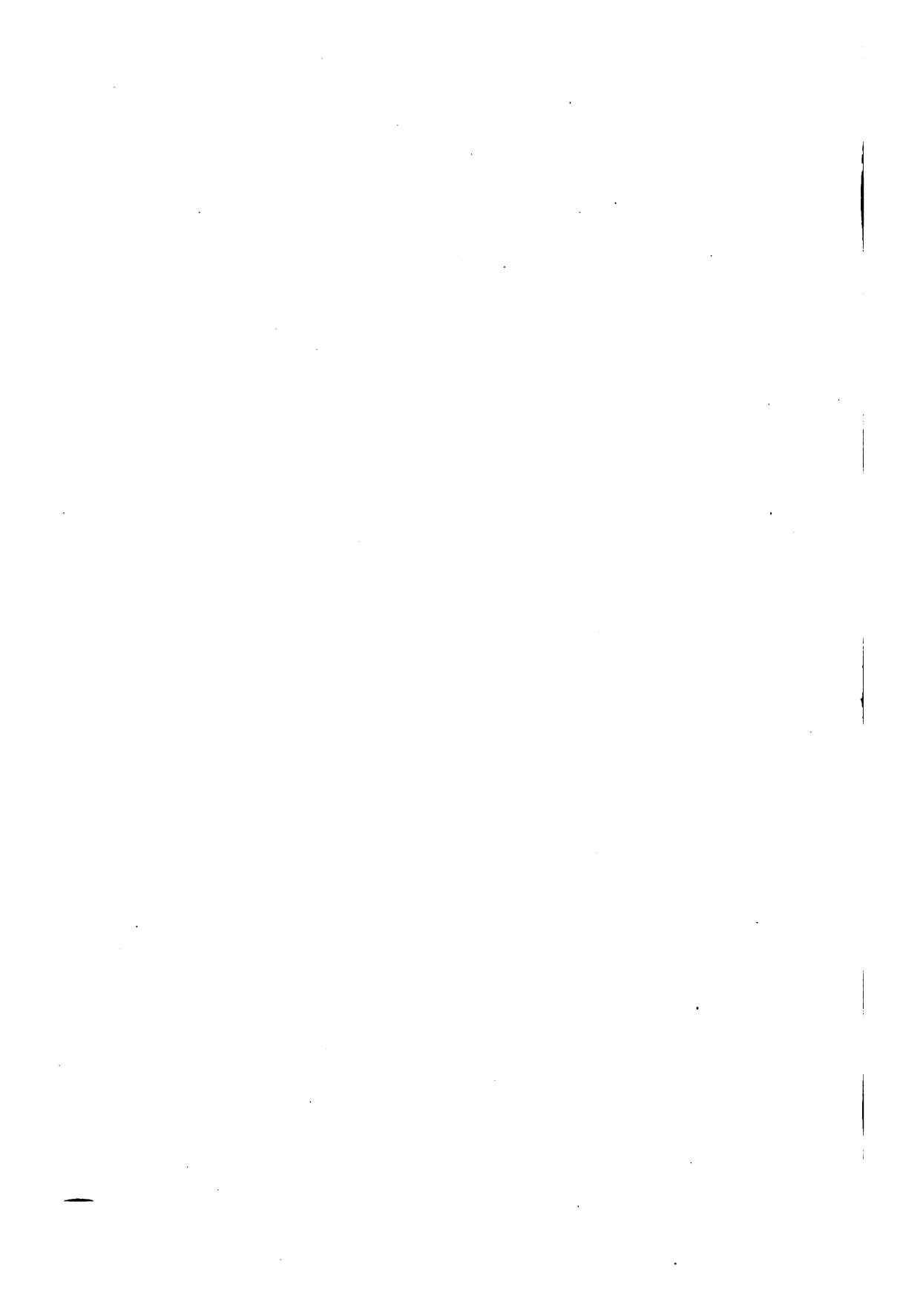




**SAMUEL MATTHEW BOSS.**

Born at York, Pa., April 3, 1797; died at Leesburg, Va.,  
August 22, 1872.







Dec. 12, 1682—Joost Janz of Meteren, in Galderlandt, and Sara du Bois of Kingston, residing in the Nieuwe Pals [New Paltz].

June, 1688—Isaac du Boys, b. in Manheym, in the Palatinate, and residing in New Paltz, and Maria Haasbrouck, b. in Moudestad, in the German Palatinate.

March 24, 1688—Walrand du Mount, b. in Kings Town, and Cateryne Ter Bos, b. in Nieuw-Yorck [New York].

April 6, 1688—Johannes Ter Bos, b. in Nieuw-Yorck, and Lysbeth Henderixen, b. in Kings Town.

March 8, 1689—David du Bois, b. in Kings Town, and Cornelia Varnoye, b. in Kings Town.

March 8, 1689—Jacob du Bois, b. in Kingstown, and Lysbeth Varnoye, b. in Kings Town.

Jan. 17, 1697—Matthys du Boys, b. in Horle [Hurley], and Sara Matthysen, b. in Kingstown.

Oct. 12, 1697—Pieter du Boys, b. at Leyden [Leiden, the celebrated University town in South Holland], and Janetje Burhans, b. at Brabant [a designation for a part of the old town of Kingston], and both residing in Kingstown.

March 26, 1699—Jacob du Boy, b. in Leyden [Leiden], and Susanna Leg, b. in Kingstown.

Jan. 19, 1701—Louwis du Boys, b. in Horle [Hurley] and residing near the Pals [New Paltz], and Rachel Hasebroeck, born and residing at the Pals.

June 13, 1703—Roelf Elting, b. in Horle and residing in Kingstown, and Sara du Boys, b. and residing in the Pals.

June 2, 1713—Philip Fiere, b. at Steyn-wiel [the present Steynweiler, a village of Bavaria, in the Palatinate, near Kandel], in the Pals [Palatinate], and Lea du Boy, b. in the Pals.

June 18, 1713—Daniel du Bois, b. in the Pals, and Marytjen Feber, born in the Pals.

Sept. 22, 1713—Abraham Buys, b. in Pakeepsy [Poughkeepsie], and Rachel Ter-Bos, b. in the Vis-kil [Fishkill].

April 6, 1714—Isaak de Boys, b. in Kingston, and Rachel de Boys, b. in the Pals.



April 23, 1715—Barent du Bois, b. in Horly, and Jacomyntjen du Bois, b. in Kingstowne.

June 20, 1717—Philip du Bois, b. in the Nieuw Pals, and Ester Gimaar, b. in Kingstown.

April 16, 1718—Louwies du Bois, b. in Kingstown, and Jannetjen van Vlied, b. in Kingstown.

Oct. 20, 1718—Peter Van Est, b. in Sommersset [Somerset County, N. J.], and Madeleentjen de Boys, widow of Geurt Roosa, b. in Kingstown.

June 21, 1720—Louwis du Bois, b. in Horly [Hurley], and Margrietjen Jansz, b. in Kingstown.

Nov. 17, 1720—Zymen Jacobsz Van Wageningen, b. in Kingstown, and Zara du Bois, b. under the jurisdiction of the Palts [New Paltz].

March 30, 1721—Benjamin de Bois, born under the jurisdiction of the Pals [New Paltz], and Catryntjen Zuyland, b. in Horly.

June 17, 1722—Hiskia du Bois and Annatjen Peersen, both parties born and residing under the jurisdiction of Kingstown.

Dec. 9, 1722—Petrus Math. Louw, b. in Horly, and Catrina du Bois, b. in the Pals, and both now residing in the latter place.

April 20, 1723—Godfried Wolven, b. in Hoogduytsland [Germany], and Zara du Bois, b. in Kingstown.

Feb. 12, 1725—Petrus Smeedes, b. in Kingstown, and Catrina du Bois, b. in Horley.

May 13, 1726—Nathaniel du Bois and Gertruy Bruyn, the former residing near the Pals [New Paltz] and the other in Savongonk [Shawangunk], where the marriage took place.

Sept. 15, 1726—Petrus Bogardus, b. in Kingstown, and Rebekka du Bois, b. in Horly [Hurley].

September 27, 1726—Johannes Tappen and Tjaatjen de Bois, both parties born under the jurisdiction of Kingstown and residing there.



Nov. 10, 1727 — Efraim du Bois and Anna-Catrina de Lameeter, both parties born and residing under the jurisdiction of Kingstown.

1728 (date not given) — Jacob Vernoy, b. under the jurisdiction of Kingstown, and Annaatjen du Bois, b. in Raysester [Rochester, but not the present city of Rochester, N. Y.].

1728 (date not given) — Hendericus ter-Bosch, b. at the Vischkil [Fishkill], in Duytisch [Dutchess] County, and Rachel Freer, b. in the Pals [New Paltz]. Banns registered May 5.

Oct. 4, 1728 — William Danielsz and Catrina de Bois.

Nov. 13, 1728 — Johannes de Bois and Rebekka Tappen, both parties born and residing under the jurisdiction of Kingstown.

Dec. 6, 1728 — Johannes Herdenberg Jr. and Maria de Bois.

April 7, 1729 — Cornelis de Bois, b. in the Pals, and Anna-Margrieta Hoogteeling, b. under the jurisdiction of Kingstown.

April 26, 1730 — Josef at de Bois and Tjaatjen van Keuren, b. in Kingstown.

July 18, 1731 — Gerrit du Bois, b. under the jurisdiction of Horly, and Margrietjen Elmendorff, b. under the jurisdiction of Kingstown.

1732 (date not given) — Jonathan du Bois, b. in Kingstown and residing at the Viskil [Fishkill], and Ariaantjen Osterhout, b. and residing in Brabant [a designation for a portion of the old town of Kingston]. Banns registered July 30.

Aug. 5, 1732 — Ysaak du Bois and Neeltjen Roosa, both born and residing in Horly.

May 6, 1733 — Henderikus du Bois, b. in the Pals, and Jannetjen Hoogteeling, b. under the jurisdiction of Kingstown.

Oct. 19, 1733 — Nathan du Bois and Susanna Cool, both parties born and residing under the jurisdiction of Kingstown.

June 21, 1734 — Coenraad Elmendorff Jr., b. under the jurisdiction of Kingstown, and Zara du Bois, born under the jurisdiction of Horly.



July 14, 1784—Josia Elting, b. in Kingston and residing in the Pals, and Helena du Bois, b. and residing in the Pals.

Dec. 11, 1786—Johannes du Bois and Judikje Wynkoop, both parties born and residing in Horly.

Sept. 9, 1787—Cornelis Nieuwkerk and Neeltjen du Bois, both parties born and residing in Horly.

March 9, 1789—Thomas Bosch, b. and residing under the jurisdiction of Mormel, and Lisabeth Merkel, b. at the Kerkeland and residing in Kingston.

Oct. 31, 1740—Andries Springsteen, b. at the Visch-Kil [Fishkill] and residing in Duysis [Dutchess] County, and Oatrina Bosch, b. and residing in Mormel.

1748 (date not given)—Henderikus Oosterhoud and Pieternele Bosch, both residing in Brabant. Given a certificate Feb. 27.

Aug. 10, 1744—Henrich Brink, farmer, and Susanna du Bois, both residing in the county of Ulster.

Sept. 27, 1745—Samuel Dubois and Marietje Burhans, widow of William Legg.

Oct. 24, 1745—Louis Bevier Jr., b. in the Pals and residing in Mormel, and Hester Dubois, b. in the Pals and residing in Rochester.

1745 (date not given)—Jacobus Bosch Jr., born and residing in Mormel [Marbletown], and Annaatjen Merkel, b. at the Kerkeland [Churchland], and residing in Mormel. Banns registered Oct. 18.

1745 (date not given)—Andrew Lefevre, b. in the Pals, and Rachel Dubois, b. in Schawegonk [Shawangunk], and both residing in the Pals. Banns registered Oct. 20.

1745 (date not given)—Johannes Van der Merken and Susannah Bosch, both b. and residing in Mormel. Banns registered Nov. 17.

May 22, 1746—Lodewyk Horenbeek and Maria Dubois, both parties born and residing in Rochester.

May 24, 1746—Nehemia du Bois, b. and residing under the jurisdiction of Kingston, and Catharina Brink, b. and residing in Horli [Horley].



June 8, 1746 — Jacob de Bois, residing at the Viakil, and Antjen van Bommel, residing under the jurisdiction of Kingston.

May 15, 1748 — Hiskia du Bois Jr. and Rachel Nieuwkerk, both residing under the jurisdiction of Kingston.

Sept. 27, 1749 — Salomon du Bois Jr., residing in the county of Albanie [Albany], and Margaret Sammans, residing in the county of Ulster.

Nov. 30, 1751 — Petrus Maste and Sara Dubois, both born and residing in Kingston.

May 28, 1752 — Isaac Dubois Jr., residing under the jurisdiction of Albanie, and Lena Samman, residing in Schawegonk.

Nov. 3, 1752 — John West and Tanneke Dubois, both residing in Ulster County.

May 25, 1753 — Henricus Horenbeck and Maria Dubois, both born and residing in Rochester.

June 1, 1753 — Philippus Müller, b. in Katskil [Catskill], and Susanna Dubois, b. and both residing under the jurisdiction of Kingston.

Oct. 31, 1754 — Johannes Gerardusse Hardenberg, b. in Horli, and residing under the jurisdiction of Rochester, and Cornelia Dubois, b. and residing in Rochester.

Dec. 20, 1754 — Charles de Wit and Blandina Dubois, both residing in Mormel.

Sept. 26, 1755 — Jacob du Bois, b. in Horly and residing under the jurisdiction of Kingston, and Rebecca van Wagenen, b. and residing in Wagendal [Wagondale, in Ulster County].

June 18, 1757 — Gerret Deffenpoort, widower, and Maria Bos, spinster (residence, Mormel or Marbletown).

March 22, 1757 — Philippus Dubois, b. and residing under the jurisdiction of the Pals, and Anna Hue, b. at the Wale Kil [Walkill] and residing under the jurisdiction of the Pals.

Nov. 15, 1757 — Johannes Schoonmaker and Catharina du Bois, both parties born and residing at the Sagertje [Sagerties].

Dec. 17, 1757 — Andries de Wit and Rachel Du Bois, both parties born and residing in Ulster County.



March 26, 1758 — Daniel Ter Bos, ship-captain, and Cornelia Rykman, both residing at the Vis Kil [Fiskill], Dutchess [Dutchess] County.

Nov. 26, 1759 — Abraham Elting and Dina Dubois, both born and residing under the jurisdiction of the Pals.

April 14, 1760 — Matheus Dubois and Catharina Hoof, both born and residing under the jurisdiction of Kingston.

Aug. 16, 1760 — Samuel Leg, b. and residing in Braband, and Sara Dubois, b. under the jurisdiction of Kingston and residing in Braband.

Oct. 5, 1760 — Isaac Dubois, widower, and Jannetje Rosa, both residing under the jurisdiction of Horli.

Feb. 14, 1761 — George Lassing and Lea Dubois, b. under the jurisdiction of Kingston, and both residing in Braband.

Jan. 27, 1762 — Matheus Dubois, b. and residing under the jurisdiction of Kingston, and Trientje Dubois, b. and residing under the jurisdiction of the Pals.

May 28, 1762 — Cornelis Wynkoop and Lea Dubois, both residing in Ulster County.

Oct. 9, 1762 — Johannes Garvy and Marretje Du-Bois.

Oct. 25, 1762 — Salomon Du Bois and Ariantje Du Bois.

Oct. 25, 1762 — William Thompson and Tjatje Du Bois.

Dec. 16, 1763 — Tobyas van Buuren and Sarah du Boys, both of Kingston.

Nov. 24, 1764 — Abraham Heermanssen, of Dutchess County, and Catharina du Bois, of Ulster County.

Feb. 18, 1769 — Cornelius Dubois Jr., b. and residing in Hurley, and Geertje Van Vliet, b. in Kingston and residing in Hurley.

April 15, 1769 — Josua Dubois and Catharena Schepmoes, both parties born and residing under the jurisdiction of Kingston.

Oct. 18, 1770 — Jeremia Dubois and Catriena Masten, both parties born and residing under the jurisdiction of Kingston.



May 4, 1771—Jacob Dubois and Hendireca Dubois, both born and residing in Horle, near Kingstoun.

Dec. 17, 1753—Johannis N. Dubois and Marya Oosterhout, both born and residing under the jurisdiction of Kingston.

Dec. 22, 1775—Petrus P. Crispel and Sara Dubois, "in Hurly."

July 5, 1776—Thomas Janson, b. and residing in Marmel [Marbletown], and Janeke Dubois, b. and residing in the same place.

April 21, 1777—Cornelius Swaert and Helena Dubois, both parties born and residing under the jurisdiction of Kingston.

Dec. 25, 1779—Petrus Dubois and Ariantje Noukirk, both born and residing under the jurisdiction of Horly.

Oct. 10, 1781—Samuel Dubois and Maria Roberson, both born and residing under the jurisdiction of Kingston.

April 20, 1783—Josuah Dubois and Margrit Masten, both born and residing in Kingston.

Oct. 22, 1786—Jacob Brink and Elisabeth Dubois, both born and residing under the jurisdiction of Marmel.

June 28, 1787—Matheus Dubois and Margrit Teffenbord, both born and residing under the jurisdiction of Kingston.

Dec. 3, 1789—Abraham Meier and Annatje Dubois, both parties born and residing under the jurisdiction of Kingston.

Nov. 18, 1790—Petrus Dubois and Ballie Post, both parties born and residing under the jurisdiction of Kingston.

May 16, 1798—Jacobus Dubois, widower, and Catharina Ryker, widow, both from under the jurisdiction of Kingston.

Jan. 25, 1795—John C. Dubois and Maria Seilant, both residing under the jurisdiction of Hurly.

Jan. 1, 1798—John Dubois and Elisabet van Wagenen, both from under the jurisdiction of Kingston.

July 18, 1800—Daniel Worthen and Marietje Dubois, both residing under the jurisdiction of Kingston.

Aug. 28, 1800—Isaak Bosch, b. under the jurisdiction of Marmel and residing in Schokan [Shokan], and Betsie Mc-



Kettle, b. at the Fisch Kill [Fishkill] and residing under the jurisdiction of Woodstok [Woodstock].

May 4, 1801 — Elias Willcox and Catharine Bosch, both residing under the jurisdiction of Marmel [Marbletown].

May 20, 1804 — Gerrit Van Wagenen and Elisabet Bosch, both residing under the jurisdiction of Marmel.

April 28, 1809 — Andrew Dubois and Rachel Constabel, both residing in Kingston.

Aug. 21, 1809 — Derick Dubois and Evelina Suyland, both of Hurley.

When I began this list, it was my intent to include only the names Bos, Boss, Bosch, Ter Bos and Ter Bosch; but, you will observe, these names almost disappear, and we have the various forms of du Boy, Du Bois, Dubois, etc., and it would not be surprising if these were variations of the name we are seeking. The suspicion of this is strengthened by the "Dutchiness" of very many of the Christian names given in the list. I must confess, however, that, until it was suggested in one of your letters, I never entertained the remotest idea that there could be any connection between the names "Boss" and "Dubois." But when one reflects upon the indifference of people in regard to the spelling of proper names, — even their own, — a century or two ago, it can easily be seen how the transformation would be made. Added to this is the fact that in the early day, in this country, many of the records, especially in churches and similar bodies, were kept by persons of slender learning, who would be very apt to make errors in transcribing names with which they were unfamiliar. In the book



from which the foregoing list was compiled, many of the Dutch names were recorded by German ministers, and it is to be feared that they made a sad mess of some of them.

The Register of the Old Dutch Church contains a long list of baptisms — too long to be transcribed and printed here. It is much to be doubted if any connecting link between these names and the objects of our researches will ever be found.

The *Narragansett Historical Register*, a periodical publication, has devoted much space to local records, and I gather a considerable number of items from its pages. Among them are the following :

*Old Smithfield (Conn.) Records.*

May 25, 1813, Solomon B. Boss, son of Jabez and Sarah, m. Catherine Knowles, dau. of Robert and Lucy Anna, all of South Kingstown. Quakers.

Died, June 27, 1814, Lucy Anna, dau. of above.

Sept. 8, 1839, James M. Boss m. Nancy Vickery.

On the same date, William Phillips of South Coventry, Conn., m. Emily Boss of Scituate.

*Richmond (R. I.) Town Records.*

Oct. 27, 1758, Joseph Boss m. Content Peterson.

Feb. 14, 1782, Elder Charles Boss officiated at a marriage ceremony. His name occurs in a like connection on several occasions, in the records.

Sept. 14, 1760, Peregrine Fry Tripp of Exeter m. Martha Boss, dau. of Jeremiah.

April 16, 1778, Charles Boss m. Mary Webster.

Feb. 14, 1839, Abner N. Woodmansee of Hopkinton m. Eliza Boss of Richmond.



Nov. 25, 1778, Benjamin Barber m. Susannah, dau. of Peter Boss, both of Richmond.

Feb. 9, 1775, Charles Boss m. Mary Webster, both of Richmond.

Nov. 26, 1812, David Gardiner m. Martha Boss, widow of Jonathan.

*South Kingstown, R. I.*

Jan. 30, 1845, Abiel Sherman m. Susannah Boss.

Feb. 14, 1763, Peter Boss m. Susannah Stanton of Richmond.

Aug. 8, 1745, Richard Boss of Charlestown m. Mary Babcock of South Kingstown.

April 14, 1742, George Gardiner m. Sarah Boss.

In a list of freemen in the Towne of South Kingtowne Dec. 21, 1696, is Petter Boss.

In a similar list in South Kingstown, 1742, is Peter Boss.

From a record of the Richmond Family I obtain the following :

Edward Richmond, b. 1780, in Exeter, R. I.; m. Phebe Boss of Griswold, Conn. Had four blind children. Lived in Exeter.

Almira Richmond, b. in Hopkinton, R. I., Aug. 20, 1821; d. Nov. 13, 1857; m., in 1838, Ezekiel J. Boss.

At least one of the family seems to have received political honors, for I find that at the election held in August, 1816, John L. Boss Jr., one of the Federalist candidates for Congress, was elected in Rhode Island.

Of the members of the Boss family whose names I have gathered from the local records, it seems to me that most of them are likely to have been descendants of the first Edward Boss, tho the names do not appear in the list sent by Mr. Robert P. Boss.



The Revolutionary records ought to afford much information, if one only knew where to look and what to look for. Such an investigation, however, would involve an expenditure of more time and means than are at my disposal.

In a list of Massachusetts soldiers and sailors in the Revolution I find the following:

Ebenezer Boss, boy, brigantine *Tyrannicide*, commanded by Capt. John Cathcart; engaged May 12; discharged June 28 [year not given; probably 1779].

Jabez Boss, ship General Mifflin, commanded by Capt. George W. Babcock; list dated Sept. 9, 1780; age, 20 years; complexion light; residence, Massachusetts.

James Boss, gunner, ship General Mifflin, commanded by Capt. George W. Babcock; list dated Sept. 9, 1780; age, 19 years; complexion, light; residence, Massachusetts.

In a list of Revolutionary pensioners published by the United States Government in 1835, I find the following:

*Washington County, R. I.*

Jabez Boss, private; Rhode Island continental line; placed on pension-roll Oct. 13, 1820; commencement of pension, Aug. 16, 1820; age, 64. "Dropped; did not serve nine months in continental line."

*Providence County, R. I.*

Benjamin Boss, sergeant, Rhode Island continental line; placed on pension roll Sept. 23, 1818; commencement of pension, Aug. 10, 1818. "Suspended under act May 1, 1820."

Just as I am closing this letter, I receive the following from Dr. C. W. Larison, of Ringos, N. J.:



In that leaflet entitled "The Boss Family" I take some interest—the more so because, at one time, I edited a little magazine devoted to the history of this locality, in which in early times lived sturdy men whose family name was Boss. As early as 1717 one Henry Boss had a guardian by name Race. In November, 1721, Honas Boss bought of Nathan Allen a farm less than a mile from the office in which I am writing this letter, which farm passed from father to son until 1853. This said Honas Boss had a son Peter, who had a son William, who had a son Peter, who died, very old, in 1853. Tradition informs me that brothers of Peter went to York State [New York], at a time at which from this locality went many to settle in Central and Western New York.

William Boss, son of Peter, married Mary Larison, sister to my grandfather Larison, from which union issued a numerous progeny.

Honas Boss came into this neighborhood with that great influx of religious zealots who, intending to land at New York, by some mishap were driven out of their way and found themselves in the mouth of the Delaware, up which they sailed to Philadelphia; thence overland they started thru virgin forests to reach their comrades in New York. But, lured by the goodness of the soil as proven by the forest thru which they passed, they purchased and settled upon estates extending from the Delaware River to the Hudson. So I have little hope that you will establish a line of descent from this family. However, in case you do, come over to visit me and I will show you the house still standing—constructed of huge hewn timbers—which was built by the primogenitor, Honas Boss, and occupied by himself and his descendants until 1853. In it I have visited many a patient. Tho good yet, it is the oldest house in Central New Jersey, so far as I know.

The Bosses, as far back as I can learn of them, were large of stature, intelligent, enterprising and accommodating, and of that suaveness of manner which wins the respect of all good



citizens. The one with whom I was best acquainted was a well-proportioned, dignified man, six feet six inches tall, and as good as he was long. He was a tailor by trade; but, during the long evenings of winter and the afternoons of Sunday in summer, he taught classes the art of singing. At one time he was a member of the Legislature of New Jersey, and often he held other important positions. Tho he generally carried his points, he intentionally offended no one.

Today, in this country, those of the stock are few.

Very respectfully, C. W. LARSON.

This letter, now pretty lengthy, is, as you see, mainly a collection of memoranda; but, by having these bits of "testimony" brought together in one book, we may, perhaps, make out a clear case, even if much of the evidence is but circumstantial.

Very truly yours, HENRY R. BOSS.

*William Graham Boss to Henry R. Boss.*

16 UNION STREET, EDINBURGH,  
December 31st, 1890.

Mr. Henry R. Boss, Chicago.

Dear Sir: Truly your letter of 28th October contains a large number of facts, and you say well that Mr. R. P. Boss has fulfilled his promise handsomely in his valuable contribution to the record of the name. I don't know if the history of the Quaker sect would



throw any light on the nationality of the first Edward Boss mentioned, but there appears to me some doubt as to where he was actually born; it would be interesting if proof was forthcoming of his having been a German or a Hollander. Perhaps this statement may have been of later origin than his time.

In the large number of facts which you have obtained from sources examined, doubtless most of them are the record of Dutch bearers of the name Bosch, and you rightly say that they suggest how easily the name might be altered to suit the environment. In point of time the spelling Boss appears to be earlier than the Dutch, Bosch or Bos, with you, and it may argue a different source; I have seen the name Boys mentioned in one of the Eastern States as early as 1616 or thereabout, but I can not lay my hands on the reference at the time of writing.

On looking over my notes having reference to influences bearing on the name, I find I have omitted an important one, and I send it herewith:

Boece — The medieval form for Boethius, the name of an ancient Roman philosopher, author of "The Consolation of Philosophy," a great and familiar classic during the Middle Ages and early Renaissance. Competent authorities state that a large number of versions of this work appeared during those periods. The following selections may serve to show how far-reaching its influence was:

France: "Boece," a Provençal poem of the eleventh century.

England: King Alfred's translation of the "Consolation," in the ninth century. "Boece," by Geoffrey Chaucer, second half of the fourteenth century.



Scotland: "Boece de Consolation," a copy in the library of Mary Queen of Scots, in the second half of the sixteenth century.

Hector Boies, the author, in his Latin works used the name of Boethius, apparently from the similarity of his own name to the then current medieval name for this ancient writer, and perhaps also from sympathetic influence of his writings.

Bellenden, the translator of Hector Boies' Chronicles, naturally used the accepted form "Boece" in his work, as it was ready to hand and gave the understood pronunciation of the name in Scotland; it also had the merit of an established reputation. This is the only instance of the name written in this way; it is simply a literary version, which has continued in use to the present time; and doubtless after appearing in this connection it would exercise some influence on later forms of the name in Scotland, as will be more apparent when we come to consider the name as written after the fifteenth century.

In considering the variations in the name as written in documents from the twelfth century onward, the great variety is at once apparent; a feature which is by no means confined to this name alone. All the Norman names have been treated in the same way, more or less. To begin with the twelfth century, when it first appears in contemporary documents in Scotland, and confirming to some extent the traditional account of the arrival of the name as given at pages 27 and 28:



We learn from Bain's Calendar of Documents relating to Scotland, Vol. II, page 422, No. 9, which is an abstract of a roll of early grants by Scottish kings, nobles and others to the Hospital of St. Peter of York, that a charter was granted by Robert de Brus, second of the name, who was Lord of Annandale 1141-1171. He received this extensive lordship from his father, the Lord of Skelton, in Yorkshire, who had a gift of it from his friend, King David the First, about 1125, which was confirmed to his son by King William the Lion in 1166, to be held of him "by the service of ten knights." The deed runs in abstract:

Robert de Brus to all his men Franks and Angles of the whole vale of Anant. Grants to the brethren of St. Peter of York for his father's and his own souls, and those of his mother wife and children, a house in Lochmaben with its "mansura" and land. Witnesses: Lady Eufemia, Peter de Turp, Ivo de Crosseby, Humfrey dal Boys, Robert Albalestor, Robert Malet, William the chaplain, Roger.

As usual at that time, the document is undated, but it may be sometime between 1168 and 1171, as the grantor died in this latter year.

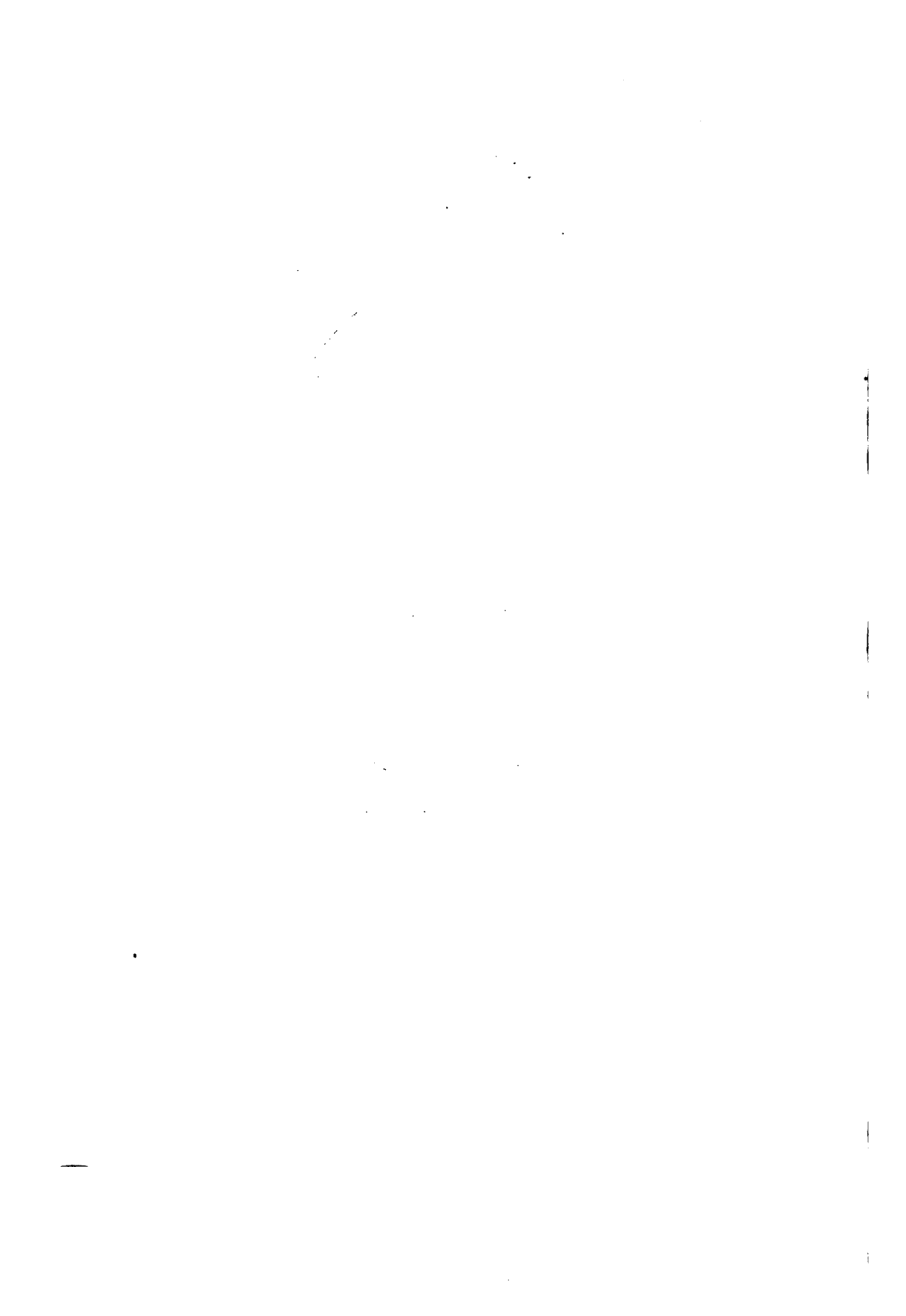
It is instructive to note the order in which the witnesses' names occur, as they would be arranged partly according to precedence: the Lady Eufemia was the wife of the grantor, who is followed by three representatives of the Norman-French settlers or their descendants—the Franks of the document, because they spoke the French of Normandy; the next two witnesses represent the Anglo-Saxon element in the dis-





GEORGE R. BOSS,  
Of Milton, Wisconsin.







trict, and the native section is possibly represented by Roger. Also a point worthy of note is the simple prefix "de" given to the first two of the Normans, tending to confirm the statement made by Bardsley, in his "English Surnames," that those who are described as "del" or "du" were in all probability later immigrants.

And in this connection it is of interest to point to the quarter in Normandy where the Bruce family held their fief, as it may also be in the district from whence the Bois family came. What conduces to favour this supposition is the fact of other Norman families who were settled in Annandale or its neighborhood having come from the Cotentin. M. de Gerville, in his *Recherches*, identifies the remains of Le Château d'Adam, at Brix in the Cotentin, between Cherbourg and Valognes, as the site of their ancient home in Normandy.

Among the companions of the Conqueror in 1066 was the Sire de Bruis, who obtained the manor of Skelton in Yorkshire, and other extensive properties. In the Roll of Battle Abbey compiled after the battle of Hastings, and giving a list of the chief Normans who fought there, we find the Sire de Bois. It is not known when this roll was actually drawn up, but it is supposed to have been some time after the event, and it is not looked on as altogether trustworthy, it being supposed that additions were made to it in order to include the names of the chief adventurers who came over after the conquest and acquired a position in the

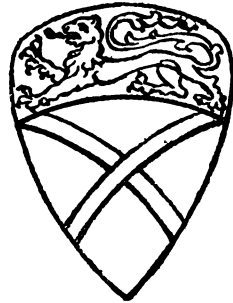


country, or of those who afterward rose to positions of note.

It was about the time of this charter, or, generally speaking, in the second half of the twelfth century, that armorial bearings began to be used as hereditary cognizances; and we find the Bruces of Skelton bearing "Argent a lion rampant azure." And the second Robert de Bruis of Annandale—1141–1171—or his son, Robert, the third in succession,—1171–1191,—used a seal bearing per fess,



first, a lion passant; second, a saltire and chief. We have here an early example of a compounded coat of arms—the Bruce lion placed passant in the position of honour on the shield, and the saltire, or St. Andrew's cross showing the crusader; the bearings may be described briefly as Annandale-Bruce, and the blazon may run first argent a lion passant azure; second, argent (or perhaps Or) a saltire and chief gules. The Bruce family afterward laid aside the lion and bore the simple saltire and chief.



This is the earliest example of the saltire and chief as armorial bearings in Annandale, and the saltire or St. Andrew's cross is probably derived from service in the Crusades, which were engaged in at this time; the third Crusade—1188–1191—



is believed to mark the period when heraldic ensigns became hereditary. And we learn that in 1190 a goodly company of knights and esquires from Annandale and the neighbourhood accompanied King Richard the First to the Holy Land; and it was in this crusade that the crusaders had the cross on the breast of their surcoat distinguished by different colours: the French wore red, the English white and the followers of the count of Flanders green.

Geoffrey de Vinsauf, who accompanied King Richard on this crusade, mentions in his "Itinerary" three bearers of the name who distinguished themselves on various occasions. The first one noted is an archer named "William du Bois, a Norman, and a most skillful archer," who rendered excellent service in Cyprus in 1191; then in the same year, at Ramula, in the Holy Land, in the company of the Earl of Leicester, who defeated the Turks, among others honourable mention is made of Arnald du Bois, who may be the same person spoken of below, and in this case it is quite possible the lion on the canton may be an honourable augmentation of his arms; this is one of the early members of the English branch of the name, and, no doubt, related to the Scottish branch of the time. Then, in the following year, when King Richard undertook the relief of Joppa, which was besieged by Saladin, the chronicler says: "The word was forthwith given, the galleys were pushed to land; the king dashed forward into the waves with his thighs unprotected by armour, and up to his middle in the water;



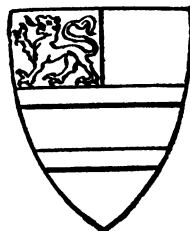
he soon gained firm footing on the dry strand ; behind him followed Geoffrey du Bois and Peter de Pratelles, and in the rear come all the others rushing through the waves." They are led to victory by the lion-hearted king, and relieve the town.

From the same writer we learn that the Crusaders had various heraldic ensigns, as in the army at Assur: "There you might have seen their most appropriate distinctions, standards and ensigns of various forms;" and again, in the march to Jerusalem, "shields emblazoned with lions or flying dragons in gold," and "the royal standard of the lion."

Although the document quoted contains the earliest instance of the name "Bois" being found in Scotland so closely associated with the great family of Bruce, yet, judging from heraldic evidence, which is of some importance, there is reason to suppose they were old allies. We find at the beginning of the following century an Ernald de Bois bearing "two bars and on a canton a lion passant;" and a Walter Bois bearing on his seal "a lion rampant;" also another of the name bearing "Gules a lion rampant double queued



argent." The bearing of the lion was a favourite symbol in early heraldry, and these tinctures, white and red, and white and blue, were borne by various members of the Bruce family in common





with others ; but there was always some difference in the arrangement, as these few examples show. The point I wish to emphasize is that the earliest Bruce bearings were lions varied between these tinctures, and the presence of the same animal and tinctures in early Bois arms, and the contemporary feudal connection between the two Norman houses.

Then in Scotland we have toward the end of the thirteenth century an example in the seal of the widow of Sir Andrew de Bois, Lord of Redcastle in the north, which seal bears two lions rampant combatant, and four small shields bearing this lady's paternal arms, a "bend." The accompanying outline shows the heraldic portion of the seal the full size of the original, which is surrounded with the legend, "Sigillum secreti Elizabeth Bysete." Also another ex-



ample in the impression of a seal appended to a deed in 1292 ; the seal is circular in form, bearing a "lion rampant" on a shield suspended by a strap from what appears to be an oak tree, and between two smaller trees of the same species, forming a bosky background to the owner's escutcheon ; the whole enclosed within the legend, "PARMI CEU HAUT BOIS CONDURAY MA MIE," which appears to be a playful allusion to his name, and also possibly referring to his position in the country geographically. I hope to refer to this seal again.



Possibly the family associations may go back to the time when they were Vikingers, previous to the conquest, in the early part of the tenth century, of that province of France which was called Normandy after them. But we may be able to say something about this when we come to consider their staunch adherence to the Bruce family during the time of their contest for the Scottish crown and national independence.

Meanwhile let us examine the various forms of the name as found in documents from the twelfth century onward. The lists are instructive as showing the various stages of evolution and transformation from the simple forms of the Norman-French to the more or less corrupted nomenclature of a changed environment in later times. Each variant in its respective group is given in chronological sequence as far as possible, and as a matter of course they overlap from one century into the next.

The twelfth century — del Boys, del Bois, de Bois, (Latinised) de Bosco, de Boscho.

The thirteenth century — del Bois, de Bois, de Boys, Boys, du Boys, (Latin) de Bosco, de Boscho.

The fourteenth century — de Bois, de Boys, (Latin) de Bosco.

The fifteenth century, first half — Boys, Bois, de Boyis, de Boys. Second half — Boyis, Boyes, Bost, Boist, Bust, Boiste, Buste, Bowse, Boyce, Bos, Bois, Bowsie, Bousie, (Latin) Boecii.

The sixteenth century — Boies, Boyis, Boys, Boise, Boyes, Bowse, Boiss, Bowsy, Boyise, Boyse, Boas, Boess, Boice, Boece, Boist, Boyiss, Boeis, Buse, Buyss, Bowsy, Bowosye, Bowsie, Bousie, Buist, Busie. Latin — Boethius, Boetius, Beccius,



*Beicius, Boethii, Boetii, Boecii, Boethio, Boetio, Boecio, Boethium, Boetium.*

The seventeenth century, or later, and uncertain — *Boaze, Boes, Boss, Boaz, Bowes, Boase, Boost, Buist, Boos, Bowa, Bowis, Boosie, Boyes, Boys.*

The forms actually in use at the present time, in Scotland — *Boyes, Boes, Boase, Boaz, Bowes, Boss, Bowrie, Bousie, Boosie, Buist, Bost, Boas, Boase, Boyce, Boies.*

*Boy* — 1488. This is a contraction for *Boyis*, sometimes written with dots above the *yi*.

*Bousa, Bovsa* — Date 1556, about the middle of the sixteenth century,

From the foregoing classification it will be seen that the prefix “*del*” occurs only in the twelfth and early in the thirteenth centuries, and they are found designating two bearers of the name. During the twelfth century, as might be expected, we find the purest orthography, and the bearers compose a small band of immigrants, but it was not long before they spread over the country, as we shall see further on.

We now come to the thirteenth century, in which there is little or no alteration in the spelling. The only example not having a prefix occurs in 1250, which may be an omission of the clerk, and is found at the town of Dumfries, where a Robert Boys serves as a juror, and likely he would be a “man of guid” in the town, a merchant. This century also furnishes the only instance of the prefix “*du*,” which is a contraction for “*del*” or “*de la*,” and in this case we may also be indebted to the writer of the document for its presence. The Latin forms during this century are the same as in the previous one.



In the following century the name is written with the prefix "de" only; this is considered the most ancient way, and it is said there was a fashion about this time for those of Norman-French descent to lay aside "del" and "du" and use "de," in order to make their descent appear as ancient as possible.

In the early part of the fifteenth century there is a dropping of the prefix, but the original form is found, with slight variations, till about the middle of the century, when a change takes place—the sign of foreign descent being practically confined to the first half of the century. During the second half they seem to have made up their minds to transform the name as much as possible; a number of causes probably operated to bring this about, such as decay of medieval learning, the dawn of the Renaissance, and increase of population. Whatever the cause, there can be no doubt about the great change which has come over the name. All the old names were more or less affected in this way, and the one under consideration is just a good example of the treatment which the Norman-French names received when the bearers had become thoroughly incorporated into the nation. About the beginning of the last quarter of the century we first encounter such forms as Bowse, Bost, Bos; and with reference to this last one, it is probably a contraction for a longer form, occurring only twice, as far as I have seen—once in 1494, again in 1498, and applied to a John Bos in Fifeshire and to an Alexander Bos in Aberdeenshire. The only Latin



version of this time is found in 1492-94, and is of interest, being record of a payment to Mr. Hector Boies, while at the University of Paris, where he was a student, and teacher of philosophy in Montaignu College; showing how early he came under the influence of the ancient Roman philosopher, Boethius—an influence which affected his whole life-work.

In the sixteenth century we have a further instalment of variants, about half of them hardly recognisable as the successors of the early times: the forms Boas, Boice, etc. are probably owing to the influence of Mr. Hector Boies and his writings in the early part of the century. A special feature in the formation of the name, which had its beginning in the latter part of the previous century, is the lengthening by adding a syllable, such as in Boyes, Bowsie, etc., coming to a climax in the trisyllabic Bowosye, which is found in the Records of the Convention of Royal Burghs held at Edinburgh in 1555; possibly the clerk may have been puzzled over the name of the representative—William Bowsy—from the Royal Burgh of Crail, in the East Neuk of Fife. Another feature is the total absence of any prefix, the Renaissance seemingly having eclipsed medieval usage even in surnames.

About the middle of this century a change comes over the available records, and the name appears quite merged in the general population; a number of them maintain a responsible position in the country, but there is none holding high estate. The name began to decline in worldly position about the middle of



the fifteenth century ; perhaps the loss of the ancient connection with the Bruce family may have influenced their status adversely. The Dryfsdale house, which may be considered the parent house in Scotland, is said to have ended in an heir female about 1450 ; and the Panbride family appear to have held their estate for about a century later.

Passing to the Latin versions of this century, they are found to be, without exception, either applied to Mr. Hector, or directly traceable to his influence among men of letters of that time ; most of the examples are found in the Records of Aberdeen as published by the Spalding Club.

We will now look at the seventeenth century and later examples, most of which are such as are not found previously. We have reached the period when surnames may be said to have become fixed into their present forms ; of course, as the lists show, there are a few versions which became hereditary before this time ; a great factor in this respect would be the more general diffusion of education. But even for all the endeavours to educate there are still found a good variety in the written names, even when applied to the same person, as exemplified when we meet with a bearer of the name who lived in the latter part of this century and the early part of the eighteenth, having his name variously written Boes, Boos, Bows, Bowis ; the first form being the correct one as written by the bearer, James Boes, who was a covenanting clergyman.



Another matter for consideration is the locale of the name in Scotland. Let us take "Boyes," first, as its natural habitat, so to speak, is Dumfriesshire, in the Lochmaben district of Annandale and neighbourhood, where the first Norman French bearing the name are found. This form appears to have been assumed about the latter part of the fifteenth century, is peculiar to the district, is the only one found there, and may be accounted for by the unchanging nature of the population, being a farming and pastoral country; the people are practically the same race as they were five centuries ago. In the eastern counties of Forfar and Fife, on the other hand, the greatest variety of forms are found in actual use and in written documents, and it may be taken that all the present varieties, excepting Boyes and Boss, had their origin in these two counties; the forms Boas, Boes, Boaz, etc. are of Forfarshire, and Bowes, Buist, Boosie, etc. are of Fifeshire. One influence in this county which appears to have given rise to this last form and its varieties, Bowsie, etc., is the presence in place-names and in ordinary speech of the Scotch word "bow," meaning cattle or farm stock, from which we have the term "Bowhouse," cattle-house, contracted into "Bows," and the plural form "Busses," pronounced "boose," or in common speech the cattle are "the boos." In the course of my enquiries I find a farmer whose farm is called "Bowhouse," known as "Boosie" colloquially, although his surname is quite different. The common practice is to



speak of farmers and proprietors by the names of their places of abode: thus we find John Rolland of Burnside is colloquially "Burnside;" on the other hand, the farmer in documents would be described as George Smith in Bowhouse.

This great variety in these eastern counties is very likely partly owing to the fact of their being in the center of trade and commerce during the fifteenth and two following centuries, and in the midst of a mixed and increasing population having intercourse with the continental ports of France, Holland, etc.

As showing how the name spread through the country after gaining a footing, we may run over the chief families:

Humfrey del Bois of Dryfsdale, Dumfriesshire, in the southwest, about 1170. [Bain's Calendar, Vol. II, etc.]

Thomas de Bois of Ogleface, Linlithgowshire, in the central lowlands, thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. [1296. Ragman Roll, etc.]

Sir Andrew de Bois, of Redcastle, Rossshire, in the north, about 1259-91. [Bain's Calendar, Vol. II: Family of Kilravock.]

Alexander de Bois of Castle Urquhart, on Loch Ness, in the north, about the end of the thirteenth and beginning of the fourteenth century. [Hector Boies' History, folio 308.]

(The latter two are beyond the Highland line, and were advanced outposts of the Norman influence in Scotland, where we read of castles being built by King William the Lion toward the end of the twelfth century. There was so much land forming a barony set aside for the King's representative, the governor of the castles, and the post may have been hereditary. Redcastle is inhabited at present, and is said to be the oldest inhabited castle in Scotland.)



Patrick fiz Johan de Boys, of Lanarkshire, in the western lowlands, 1296. [Ragman Roll.]

Richard de Bosco, of Jedburgh, in the south, 1305. [Bain's Calendar, Vol. II.]

Hugh Boies of Panbride, Forfarshire, in the eastern lowlands, about 1350. [Hector Boies' History, folio 335.]

Alexander Boys, scutifer (esquire), and burgess of Dunfermline, May, 1438, Fifeshire. [Registrum de Dunfermlyn, 410.]

Alexander Bos, of Belhelvie, Aberdeenshire, 1498. [Exchequer Rolls, Vol. XI.]

John de Boyse, the Laird of Cardney, Forfarshire, about 1550. [Register of Cupar Abbey, Vol. II.]

#### CHRISTIAN NAMES.

We will now give a little attention to the christian names during the same centuries; and, as before, it will be understood that the names overlap the divisions, also in a number of cases, after the twelfth century, there are more than one contemporary bearing the same name. Beginning with the twelfth century, in which they make their first appearance in Scotland, we naturally expect to find them few in number, even although there are not more than six on record. I am inclined to think there were more than one bearer of the name who arrived in Scotland during this century, because we have one named as a witness of the Bruce charter before 1171, and we have the return of King William from captivity in 1165, accompanied by a number of Normans, among whom the name is found as given at pages 27 and 28. The discrepancy may be an error of the chronicler, but there is nothing



against the probability of more than one arrival at different times. And in connection with this King's return we note that he was a prisoner at Valognes in the Cotentin, and at Falise in Normandy, and that the final agreement for his release was consummated at York,—in which district the Bruce family were settled,—from whence he departed to Scotland accompanied by the Normans. Shortly after his return we find a William de Bois witnessing documents as one of the King's clerks; he was afterward Bishop of Dunblane and Lord Chancellor of the kingdom from 1211 to 1226. In what relation the six bearers of the name stood to each other I have no means of knowing; but they occupied honourable positions, as they are found witnessing important documents along with other Normans of the court.

The distinction of first using surnames belongs to the Norman-French, and it is generally believed that most of them were taken from their places of abode; the practice came into vogue about the close of the tenth century, or early in the eleventh. Thus Humfrey del Bois is simply Humfrey of the Wood, or Forest, and it has been suggested that they were foresters, having charge thereof for a superior, and holding part in virtue of their office; but whatever may be the correct explanation of their position in relation to the wood or forest, it appears to have settled into a hereditary surname about the time of the Conquest in 1066. Thus it is one of the oldest surnames on record, and it is not surprising to find it undergoing so many



changes and settling into so many varied forms as are now found.

When the Normans arrived in Scotland they carried with them their hereditary surnames, and many of their christian names were new there also ; previous to their coming the names were largely Celtic, or single personal designations, of which we have an example in the document quoted at page 72, where the last witness is simply styled "Roger," which afterward became a native surname as Rogerson or Rogers.

From a careful examination of the printed records the following are all the christian names found in use in the Bois family :

Twelfth century — Humfrey, William, Thomas, Hugh, Richard, Walter.

Thirteenth century — Golfried or Geoffrey, William, Robert, Ralf, Humfrey, Walter, Andrew, John, Hugh, Alexander, Gilbert, Thomas, Patrick, Margaret, Radulph.

Fourteenth century — Mary, Janet, Elizabeth, Richard, Alexander, Thomas, Andrew, Walter, Humfrey, Hugh, William, John.

Fifteenth century — Henry, John, James, William, Alexander, David, Marion, Jane, Margaret, Hector, Arthur.

Sixteenth century — Alexander, Walter, Patrick, James, George, Isabella, David, John, Elizabeth, Matthew, William.

Seventeenth century — Alexander, Thomas, John, Barbara, Jean, etc.

Perhaps it is not necessary to carry the list further, as the names were spread throughout the country long before this, and they are just the same names as are found to the present time.



As introductory to our examination of the lists given above, we will take a glance at the origin and sources of the early christian names—a subject of much interest, carrying us back into the mists of Northern antiquity and the mythology of our ancestors. Out of the six names found in the twelfth century, five of them are of Teutonic origin, namely:

Humfrey, support of peace; or, as quaint old Camden says, “House-peace, a lovely and happy name, if it could turn home-wars between man and wife into peace.” A great favourite with the early Normans and borne by many a noble knight before and after the Conquest. Miss Yonge, to whose work I am indebted for many of these notes, says that from being a noble and knightly name it came to be a peasant’s appellation; and, as shown by our lists, it fell out of the vocabulary of names in the course of a few generations, and is but rarely met with now.

William, helmet of resolution. From the Teutonic mythological deity Wili, the Will, and the German Wil-helm, covering the head with the helmet of resolution. According to our old author, this name has been very common in England since the Conquest, and he gives an instance of a festival being held by King Henry the Second in 1178, when it was commanded that none but those of the name of William should dine in the Great Chamber, when one hundred and twenty-two of the name, all knights, sat down.

Hugh, mind, or thought, supposed to be from “hu,” the Scandinavian word for thought. Huginn, one of the two ravens which sat on the shoulders of Odin and revealed to him all that passed in the world; the other Munninn, memory; and when Thor made his famous visit to Utgard it was Hugi alone who was able to outstrip him in the race—like a flash of thought.



Richard, or Richardet, the first syllable from the same source as ragan, he who executes judgment, stern king, or according to Camden, powerful and rich disposition, and signified powerful in the army; one of the Paladins. There were three Dukes of Normandy who bore the name, and any number among the Normans; it gave name also to three kings of England, and has been a common one in the country ever since.

Walter, general of an army, from Waldheri, powerful warrior, a very old name in the North and borne from thence to Normandy, which furnished twenty-eight of the name to Domesday Survey of England after the Conquest.

Galfridus, Geoffrey, Godfrey, joyful peace, or good peace, believed to be from Guth, one of the Northern deities, and thought to have been largely used by the Normans of the time, from Gottfried of Lorraine, the famous crusader.

Radulfus, Ralf, house wolf, from the Gothic "razn," a house, or a shield from the protection given. The name is found in St. Rudolphus, bishop of Bourges in 888; and thirty-eight of the name are given in Domesday Book, and many bearers are found among the crusaders, which were drawn from the western chivalry.

Robert, bright fame, or famous in council, originally Hruadperaht, a bishop who founded the first Christian church at Wurms about 700; from the high estimation in which he was held, his name spread through Germany and into France, where it assumed the form Robert, and gave name to Rolf Gauge, the first Duke of Normandy, when he received Christian baptism; where it spread among his Norse followers and was thence carried on by their descendants, who first brought it to Scotland in the early part of the twelfth century.

Gilbert, bright pledge, from Giselhar, the pledged warrior, or, as Camden says, in the quaint way of Queen Elizabeth's time: "I judge it to signifie Bright or brave pledge, for in old Saxon 'gisle' signifieth a pledge. So it is a well fitting name for children, which are the only sweet pawns of love between man and wife."



These being most of the early distinctive appellations, if not actually descriptive names at the time, perhaps there may have been a lingering tradition of their original significations. It will not be necessary to extend the list further, as it sufficeth to indicate the sources from whence the early settlers derived their names.

In our list of the thirteenth century containing fourteen names, no fewer than eight of them are also Teutonic, while there are three of Greek derivation — Alexander, Andrew and Margaret; these are found at an early period in Scotland, and are believed to be due to the ancient connection with the church, before the separation into the Latin and Greek divisions in the eighth century. The Celtic or Scotch church is said to have adhered to the Greek party, and St. Andrew's being the patron saint of Scotland has caused his name to be widely spread throughout the country. The name Thomas, occurring at the end of the previous century and also during this one, is a saint name, probably from St. Thomas of Canterbury, who was a great friend of King William the Lion, who dedicated the Abbey of Arbroath to the honour of God and of St. Thomas, in the year 1178; his memory and his tragic death exercised a great influence in our island for many generations afterward, and no doubt many a Thomas would be named after him.

With the advent of the fourteenth century there is a falling off in the ancient mythological and other Teutonic names, and an increase of saint names,



tending to show the firm hold which the Roman church had obtained: out of the twelve names the number of Teutonic ones is reduced to five, and they are exactly the same names as in the eleventh century, showing no little tenacity in the race from which they sprang, and having its counterpart in later and recent times, in the repetition of certain hereditary names; while we have the first example of the saint names, Mary, which afterward acquired exaggerated use; Janet, the feminine of John, and Elizabeth.

After this century the early Teutonic almost entirely disappears: the only survivals are Hugh, Walter and William — the latter especially having retained its hold in nearly every branch of the family, and in the country generally. And possibly a few of the Williams after this, or a little before, would be named from St. William of York. Before the decay of the old names, christian names had become simply appellations, and were at this time largely taken from the lives of the saints, and it was customary to dedicate a child at its birth to a saint, whose name it bore and was believed to be under the saint's protection; sometimes the name would be adopted from the saint on whose festival day the child was born, and annual birthday celebrations were held on the patron saint's festival. In the course of time they became stereotyped from a family feeling, causing children to be named after their parents and kin; this feeling appears to have acted more strongly from about the beginning of the sixteenth century, when the medieval



church was losing her hold, after the revival of letters in Italy during the previous century, when classic influences received a new birth.

For a moment please return to the name as found in the twelfth century, when the greatest number of Teutonic christian names are met with, and along with this we see a wonderful piece of evidence of the intermixture of the Northmen with the Franks, or natives of Neustria (the name of the province before it became our Normans' home). In the course of about three generations after their settlement there, and with their usual proclivity for taking wives from among other tribes, they have become mixed with the Franks, and now speak a dialect of the French; then they add to their Teutonic personal names a Frank word as a further distinction and probably descriptive of their place of abode, or from their occupation or office. Thus we have the Norse and Frank combined, and giving names and surnames from both sources to their descendants. Very likely this rise of surnames would be a necessary measure taken to distinguish one family from another; as this practice was continued in after times when they were settled in England and in Scotland, where a son, on obtaining an estate, very often adopted the name of the property as his distinctive appellation, and which was continued by his descendants as their surname. In Scotland, the usage with names of this class gave rise to the designation, "of that Ilk," as Forbes of Forbes, or Forbes of that Ilk.



The name Humfrey appears to have been a favourite with the Dryfsdale family during the first three centuries of their residence there. They were a knightly family, as the military title "Sir," applied to them, shows; and the one already mentioned at page 72 was very likely one of the ten knights of Annandale who had to give military service to the King for their lands, held of the Lords of Annandale. This landed military class were a great power in the state at that time, and the kings of Scotland encouraged the Normans to settle in the country, as they were the most efficient soldiers of their day—the chivalry of the Middle Ages. Besides this encouragement from the kings, it is said the ladies also favoured the new comers, and this in part accounts for their rapid assimilation and diffusion over the country.

The name William was of frequent occurrence among the Normans of the period. Whether any of them derived it from their great leader, Duke William, or those in Scotland from King William, it is impossible to say, but it is not found in Scotland before their time, and it appears to have taken a firm hold in the country of their adoption, as the lists in part show. They also appear to have been fond of the names Galfrid or Geoffrey and Rudolph or Ralf, as they are found in other families about this time. These three names—Humfrey, Geoffrey and Ralf—may be said to have died out in the course of the fourteenth century; but most of the others have continued to the present.



In the thirteenth century there is a marked increase of bearers of the name; they are more than trebled, as a few of the names are repeated by different bearers. We see here a result of the long and wise reigns of three good kings, dwelling in amity with their neighbour, which has been likened to a golden age; from William, in 1165, to the death of his grandson, Alexander the Third, a hundred and twenty years after, when the country was plunged into the distracting conflicts of what was practically a civil war, for we find those of Norman descent pitched against others of the same race, their kinsmen; just to mention one instance, de Bois against de Bois, or the Scotch-Norman branch against the Anglo-Norman branch of the family. And in the following century there is a falling off in recorded names, accounted for by the long struggle of the War of Independence, in the latter part of the thirteenth and early part of the fourteenth century, with its accompanying disorganizing of peaceful pursuits, and consequent loss of life — a time when many of the Norman houses were completely cut off. And during the fourteenth century the family appears to have been just able to maintain its footing in the country; after the death of The Bruce, in 1329, the country was again overwhelmed with war and disasters, in which they bore a full share, as far as can be gathered from the records. An instance of devotion to their country has been mentioned at page 18, under date 1332. With the fifteenth century we soon begin to see signs of returning prosperity and a nu-



merical increase of the bearers of the name ; although this is not shown in the list under consideration, yet there are actually more of them, as a number of the christian names are repeated two or three times. And in 1422 we first make the acquaintance of the name James ; probably it marks an old custom of calling children after the reigning king. The reign of James the First, who was born in Dunfermline in 1394, commenced in 1406, and the name continued uninterruptedly through five kings, till 1542, so that it became one of the most common in the country. This king was the means of giving a great impetus to trade and commerce, by new laws and enactments, and, as a probable consequence of the changes which he introduced, — with greater security to those engaged in trade, — we find the family settled in Fifeshire for the first time in the early part of the century, and apparently participating in the new life which was infused into the nation, and engaged as merchants in the Abbot of Dunfermline's town of Kirkaldy, where they were councillors and gave one occupant to the civic chair ; also it is a well-known fact that local magnates of that day were largely drawn from the landed proprietors or their younger sons.

They seem to have spread very rapidly over Fifeshire, as they are found in goodly numbers toward the end of the century, when we begin to find the great changes in the name taking place as has been already mentioned. It is during this century that their amalgamation with the general population ap-



pears to approach completeness, when they laid aside their distinctive mark of Norman-French descent and accommodated the name to vernacular usage, the knowledge of which died out in the course of time, and gave rise to erroneous conjectures, in after times, with regard to the origin of the name. And here I may mention that a cousin informs me that a friend of his, who seemingly was interested in surnames, would maintain the name to have been "Boswell" originally, and that the last syllable had been dropped, when the truth is that "Boswell" was originally "de Bois-ville," as it is actually found in early records with this form of the suffix, and the first syllable is just the same as the original of "Boss;" a comparison shows how both names have been subject to the same changes, both having lost the letter *i*, under the same capricious influences.

After this digression we will now turn to the sixteenth century. During this and the succeeding centuries the same christian names are continued, having before this become the recognised christian names of the country. The Reformation of religion in 1560 does not seem to have made much difference in the christian names used, with perhaps the exception of "Patrick," a saint name, which is found in 1536. I have not found this name after the above date, and probably the change in the church may account for its absence since then; but it has not been a favourite one. The name George, occurring in 1536, may possibly be a saint name.



From my examination of the name I should say there has been very little, if any, change in it, as actually borne by any branch of the family, since the early part of the seventeenth century. And, so far as I am aware, the list of forms given as presently in use in Scotland is complete. A remarkable fact contained in this list is the total extinction of the original orthography, "Bois;" and out of the fifteen examples as borne now, only one-third are even composed of the same number of letters as the original, thus showing clearly that the general tendency has been to lengthen the name, by adding a syllable at the end, in most instances. My own experience of variations as applied to myself is not extensive, but I have been addressed as Bos, Bost, Boas, Bowes; which are likely the result of carelessness or predilection on the part of the writers. And this may account for many of the varieties found in documents, and for exceedingly few, if any, of those found in actual use. But, as already mentioned, the present form of the name was deliberately adopted as a difference.

#### THE NAME IN FICTION.

Seldom is the name found in fiction, but as a natural consequence of increase of population we might expect to find a bearer of the name in such a position as is described by John Galt, Scotch novelist, in his tale, "The Provost," written about 1821. There is no proof or knowledge of anyone of the name having actually been a town drummer; but the tale gives a



picture of life in a Scotch burgh about one hundred years ago.

The tale is told by Provost Pawkie, the chief actor, and as an amusing sketch may be introduced here. Although it is a rather rough piece of stuff, there is truth to nature; and at first sight a character having a more honourable part in a story might have been more acceptable to natural pride, but I hope we have got past

“Lord, what will all the people say,  
Mr. Mayor, Mr. Mayor!!”

and not set down all bearers of the name as knights or esquires, as some of our family histories were wont to do. Let this pass and allow us to see the entertainment provided in the tale:

#### THE TOWN DRUMMER.

Nor did I get everything my own way, for I was often thwarted in matters of small account, and suffered from them greater disturbance and molestation than things of such little moment ought to have been allowed to produce within me; and I do not think that anything happened in the whole course of my public life which gave me more vexation than what I felt in the last week of my second provostry.

For many a year one Robin Boss had been town drummer; he was a relic of some American-war fencibles, and was, to say the plain truth of him, a divor body, with no manner of conduct, saving a very earnest endeavour to fill himself fou as often as he could get the means; the consequence of which was that his face was as plooky as a curran' bun and his nose as red as a partan's tae.

One afternoon there was a need to send out a proclamation to abolish a practice that was growing into a custom, in



some of the bye parts of the town, of keeping swine at large—ordering them to be confined in proper styes and other suitable places. As on all occasions when the matter to be proclaimed was from the magistrates, Robin, on this, was attended by the town officers in their Sunday garbs, and with their halberds in their hands; but the abominable and irreverent creature was so drunk that he wamblt to and fro over the drum as if there had not been a bane in his body. He was seemingly as soopple and as senseless as a bolster. Still, as this was no new thing with him, it might have passed, for James Hound, the senior officer, was in the practice, when Robin was in that state, of reading the proclamations himself. On this occasion, however, James happened to be absent on some hue and cry quest, and another officer (I forget which) was appointed to perform for him. Robin, accustomed to James, no sooner heard the other man begin to read than he began to curse and swear at him as an incapable nincompoop—an impertinent term that he was much addicted to. The grammar school was at the time skailing, and the boys, seeing the stramash, gathered round the officer, and, yelling and shouting, encouraged Robin more and more into rebellion, till at last they worked up his corruption to such pitch that he took the drum from about his neck, and made it fly like a bombshell at the officer's head.

The officers behaved very well, for they dragged Robin by the lug and the queue to the tolbooth, and then came with their complaint to me. Seeing how the authorities had been set at nought, and the necessity there was of making an example, I forthwith ordered Robin to be cashiered from the service of the town; and as so important a concern as a proclamation ought not to be delayed, I likewise, upon the spot, ordered the officers to take a lad that had been also a drummer in a marching regiment, and go with him to make the proclamation.

Nothing could be done in a more earnest and zealous public spirit than this was done by me. But habit had begot in the town a partiality for the drunken ne'er do well, Robin,



and this just act of mine was immediately condemned as a daring stretch of arbitrary power; and the consequence was, that when the council met the next day, some sharp words flew among us, as to my usurping an undue authority; and the thank I got for my pains was the mortification to see the worthless body restored to full power and dignity, with no other reward than an admonition to behave better for the future. Now, I leave it to the unbiassed judgment of posterity to determine if any public man could be more ungraciously treated by his colleagues than I was on this occasion. But, verily, the council had their reward.

#### AN ALARM.

The divor, Robin Boss, being, as I have recorded, reinstated in office, soon began to play his old tricks. In the course of the week after the Michaelmas term at which my second provostry ended, he was so insupportably drunk that he fell head foremost into his drum, which cost the town five-and-twenty shillings for a new one—an accident that was not without some satisfaction to me; and I trow I was not sparing in my derisive commendations on the worth of such a public officer. Nevertheless, he was still kept on, some befriending him for compassion, and others as it were to spite me.

But Robin's good behaviour did not end with breaking the drum and costing a new one. In the course of the winter it was his custom to beat, "Go to bed, Tom," about ten o'clock at night, and the reveille at five in the morning. In one of his drunken fits he made a mistake, and, instead of going his rounds as usual at ten o'clock, he had fallen asleep in a change house, and, waking about the midnight hour in the terror of some whisky dream, he seized his drum, and, running into the streets, began to strike the fire-beat in the most awful manner.

It was a fine, clear, frosty moonlight, and the hollow sound of the drum resounded through the silent streets like thunder. In a moment everybody was afoot, and the cry of "Whar is't? whar's the fire?" was heard echoing from all



sides. Robin, quite unconscious that he alone was the cause of the alarm, still went along beating the dreadful summons. I heard the noise and rose; but while I was drawing on my stockings, in the chair at the bed-head, and telling Mrs. Pawkie to compose herself, for our houses were all insured, I suddenly recollected that Robin had the night before neglected to go his rounds at ten o'clock as usual, and the thought came into my head that the alarm might be one of his inebriated mistakes; so, instead of dressing myself any further, I went to the window, and looked out through the glass, without opening it, for, being in my night clothes, I was afraid of taking cold.

The street was as thronged as on a market day, and every face in the moonlight was pale with fear. Men and lads were running with their coats, and carrying their breeches in their hands; wives and maidens were all asking questions at one another, and even lasses were fleeing to and fro, like water nymphs with urns, having stoups and pails in their hands. There was swearing and tearing of men, hoarse with the rage of impatience, at the tolbooth, getting out the fire-engine from its stance under the stair; and loud and terrible afar off, and over all, came the peal of alarm from the drunken Robin's drum.

I could scarcely keep my composure when I beheld and heard all this, for I was soon thoroughly persuaded of the fact. At last I saw Deacon Girdwood, the chief advocate and champion of Robin, passing down the causey like a demented man, with a red nightcap, and his big-coat on—for some had cried that the fire was in his yard. "Deacon," cried I, opening the window, forgetting in the jocularity of the moment the risk I ran from being so naked, "whar away sae fast, deacon?"

The deacon stopped and said, "Is't oot? is't oot?"

"Gang your ways hame," quo I, very coolly, "for I hae a notion that a' this hobbleshow's but the fume o' a gill in your frien' Robin's head."

"It's no possible!" exclaimed the deacon.



"Possible here or possible there, Mr. Girdwood," quo' I, "it's owre cauld for me to stand talking wi' you here; we'll learn the rights o't in the morning; so, good night;" and with that I pulled down the window. But scarcely had I done so when a shout of laughter came gathering up the street, and soon after poor drunken Robin was brought along by the cuff of the neck, between two of the town officers, one of them carrying his drum. The next day he was put out of office forever, and, folk recollecting in what manner I had acted toward him before, the outcry about my arbitrary power was forgotten in the blame that was heaped upon those who had espoused Robin's cause against me.

So much for Provost Pawkie and the supposed worthies of an out-of-the-way Scotch burgh of 1790. There are still Pawkie Provosts among us, and are likely to be to the end of time; but the town drummer is an official of the past, and will no more entertain the burghers with his cantrips.

But to return to matters of fact, in connection with our present enquiry: The author was a native of Irvine, Ayrshire, 1779-1839; he probably became acquainted with our name in the west of Scotland, as it originated in the adjoining shire of Lanark.

And to sum up: This being an imported surname, as proved by the early Bruce charter quoted and by the language in which it first occurs, it has simply been treated by the Scotch people so as to adapt it to their own mode of speech, by the process of assimilation to words having a widely different meaning, but which were current among themselves, and which their tongues could easily "get round," to use a common expression relative to the pronunciation of an uncom-



mon word. The name has been as clay in the hands of the potters of the past centuries, and it can not be said that their productions, as a whole, are of much beauty; no, it bears the marks of many a kneading, chopping, hacking, and mixing up and forming, into every conceivable or inconceivable shape, as the fancy of those whose minds and hands it has passed through might suggest. But in defiance of all the changes to which it has been subject, the cardinal points have been fairly well retained, considering that the bulk of the users did not understand its original meaning.

There can be no doubt that it has puzzled many here at various times, and our version, "Boss," is still looked on as a foreign name, by the educated and the uneducated alike, and gives rise to hesitancy with the latter, whose knowledge does not extend beyond their native tongue, and they invariably give it in pronunciation one of their native Doric forms.

To give an illustration, and another proof: I find from the record of a patch of land called "Bois Acre," which belonged to, or was occupied by, one or more of our ancient kinsmen, at Inverkeithing, in the western district of Fifeshire, the original form is still preserved in the document. Now, on speaking to a native of the locality, and leading him on unconsciously to pronounce the name, what happens? He gives it his own Doric monosyllable forms, "Bowes" or "Bowse;" he is quite ignorant of the spelling, with which he does not trouble himself, and knows no other; the *ow* having the same sound as in now.



From the abundant examples given there can be no doubt that the name has acquired its varied native dress in the processes of assimilation and absorption, and from natural increase of families, giving rise to changes in spelling to difference of one household from another. And, as showing how strongly local influences have operated, there is not one of the forms in use which may have been adopted as a difference, which indicates any consideration for the original meaning of the name; thus tending to show that the original meaning had been lost or overlooked, after the lapse of about three hundred years. It is true some modern writers say that the name has been translated into the ordinary one "Wood," but of this I have seen no evidence further than the armorial bearings of families of this name being oak trees,—which is clearly allusive,—the earliest examples occurring along with the name about 1500.



The Blackwood Arms.

Armorial bearings have been aptly defined as "silent names," and in Workman's Scottish Armorial, compiled about 1565, is given the annexed coat of arms for the name of Blackwood, a Lanarkshire name. The blazon is Argent a saltire and on a chief sable, three oak leaves Or. The saltire and chief and oak leaves suggest that they may be derived from the Annandale family, and lend colour to a translation of the name, but of this there is no direct proof.



And to end this long, rambling letter, I beg to  
remain

Yours truly,

WM. GRAHAM BOSS.



NOTE: The second figure at page 74 has been inserted by inadvertence, and I take this opportunity of giving the correct bearing from an original impression of the seal in the British Museum; and although I mention there that the saltire or St. Andrew's cross represents a crusader, yet, as the first Bruce of Annandale married the heiress thereof, the heraldic figures on the second half may be for maternal descent, the male coat having precedence.

W. G. B.

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*Henry R. Boss to William Graham Boss.*

CHICAGO, June 1, 1900.

Mr. William Graham Boss.

My Dear Sir: At last, after much tribulation and many unforeseen hindrances, and very many things forcing themselves on my attention and taking my time, I have at last succeeded in getting your letter in type, and am thereby reminded that it is my turn to "contribute to the festivities." I shall not be able to do so as successfully as you have done; indeed,



my contribution, when compared with yours, will be a beggarly one.

To me, it is passing strange that so many people, who, it would seem, *ought* to be interested in the subject of our inquiry, are so utterly indifferent to it that they refuse, or neglect, to answer the simplest letters of inquiry. It is not that my letters do not reach them; for the envelops bear a printed request for their return in the event of non-delivery, and not one of them has ever come back to me. I have hope that, when we shall have got out one volume on the subject, it may be brought to the attention of those who can and will afford the information that I am now seeking, so that the publication of a subsequent volume will be justified.

I have received the following letter from Dr. C. W. Larison, which contains several points of interest:

RINGO, N. J., March 1, 1900.

Henry R. Boss:

In reading the pages relative to the Boss Family which you sent me, I see that one of your correspondents speculates concerning the origin of the family by name Boss and the derivation of the name Boss. Hoping to help some in arriving at a proper conclusion in these matters, and to make you certain in the matter of origin of Honas Boss, the primogenitor of the Bosses in the county of Hunterdon, N. J., I beg to state a few facts:

Honas Boss and Henry Boss, as appears in the deed by which they held lands which are now a part of the village in which I live, came from the Palatinate, between Wolfenbittel and Halberstadt, in Saxony. They came to this country in 1707, along with the Ents and Butterfauses, ancestors of my



mother. The story told me by my ancestors runs thus: Frederic Augustus, elector of Saxony, when he turned from the Reformed church to the Romish, so harassed the Protestants of his country that many of them, in that district called the Palatinate, moved, in 1705, over to Neuwied, in Rhenish Prussia, thence into Holland; thence, in 1707, they sailed to America, Their intention was to settle among the Dutch in New York, but adverse winds drove them into Delaware Bay, up which they sailed to Philadelphia, Pa. Having then determined to finish the remainder of the journey to the Dutch settlements in New York on foot, they set out from what is now the corner of Fourth and Vine streets, crossed the Delaware at New Hope, and entered the forests of the Redshal Valley of Central New Jersey, in which, as yet, no settlements had been made, but which was (but had been only from 1702, at which time those speculators purchased a part of it of the Indians) in the hands of land speculators, anxious to secure purchasers.\* Lured by the fertility of the soil, the abundance of rivulets and springs of wholesome water, and the smallness of price at which they could purchase, they, in favored spots, from the Delaware to the Raritan, selected what, in the course of events, became their domiciles—to which their descendants have clung with almost matchless tenacity.

To you it may seem queer that, in a deed by which an early citizen of New Jersey held an estate, his nativity was mentioned. The lands of West Jersey were, at first, owned by twelve men, by patent from the crown of England. They sold these lands, before there were provisions made to preserve deeds, etc., to whomsoever would purchase, giving the purchaser a deed in the form of an indenture, in which, to identify, as closely as possible, both him who sold the land and him

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\*The part of New Jersey in which I live was not purchased of the Indians until 1702, and land speculators could not give valid deeds until after that date.



who bought it; and to show that he who sold the land was the lawful owner thereof, and that the purchaser was a proper person to own lands and act as a member of society, the history of each was given, if not a citizen of one of the American colonies, clear back to the nation, township, city or village from which he came; and in case he had made stop-overs on the way, these stoppings, if he had staid only a little while, were in the deed mentioned. Further, in each of these old deeds (and in my possession are many an old parchment by which the first settlers held their lands) is stated the rank, occupation, station in society, etc. of both him who made the deed and him to whom the deed is made. Further, until near the Revolution, if a piece of land had been sold twenty times, each deed of conveyance had to enumerate each person who had prior thereto owned said lot of land and the date of the deed by which he held it, etc. So it happens that one of these old ramakins, as we call them, often contains a deal of very interesting history.

The name, written by Honas Boss and by his brother, Henry (a very wealthy man, who never married), as I have seen in several papers written by themselves, in Dutch, is Boss.

The Ents, Butterfauses, Johnsons, Bosses, etc. were very proud of their nativity, and from parent to children have handed down in tradition and in writing the story of their exile, the hardships they suffered in coming to this country, their struggles and their labors in cutting away a virgin forest and establishing in this goodly land homes and institutions which seemed to be very sacred to them. The speaking of the tongue native to this people was so persisted in that my great-grandmother (died in 1850), my grandmother and my mother, when together, spoke in Dutch. In the same tongue, in my childhood, I have heard the older Bosses, the Laushes, the Ents et al. talk, when chatting of matters relating to olden times.

I do not recall any books, papers or other things in print which will inform you respecting folks by the name of Boss.



In New Jersey, or elsewhere, I have seen the name seldom. Of persons in New Jersey there are, so far as I know, very few whose name is Boss.

Pleased will I be if in any way I can further contribute to your work of gleaning facts relative to the work you have in hand.

Very respectfully,

C. W. LARISON.

Tho the families named by Dr. Larison seem to have come to America from provinces in Germany, it also appears that they were Dutch, or Hollanders. They themselves may have been but sojourners in Germany previous to their emigration hither, or they may have been the immediate descendants of Dutch sojourners there. But direct evidence of their Dutch origin is afforded by the persistence with which they clung to the tongue of Holland, up to and including the generation immediately preceding Dr. Larison's.

A correspondent suggests, as my grandfather's middle name was Garner, that that may have been his mother's maiden name. (See Sylvia Boss, page 11.) The supposition is a probable one.

In a work entitled "Contributions for the Genealogies of the First Settlers of the Ancient County of Albany," published by Joel Munsell, Albany, N. Y., 1872, I find the following:

BOS (Bosch, alias Van Westbroeck), Cornelis Teunise, it is said, came to Beverwyck in 1681 as servant or *bouwknecht* to Cornelis Maase Van Buren. His wife was Maritie Tomase Mingael, who after his death in 1666 married Jurriaen Janse Groenwout. He owned considerable real estate in the village. At his death he had one daughter, Wyntie, living. He was



accused frequently before the court of slander and backbiting: in 1657 by Do. Schaets; in 1658 of having defamed the honorable court; and again in 1659, for which he was fined 1,200 guilders and banished for twelve years; next year he was again arraigned for a similar offense against Willem Teller.

BOS, Pieter Janse, and Susanna Barentse. . . . his wife, m. 1788. Children: Eytie, baptized March 24, 1689; Jan, bap. August 4, 1691; Jenneken, bap. in New York December 1, 1698; Sara, bap. in New York June 20, 1697.

BOS (Bosch), Gysbert, and Hester Ryck [Ryckse Van Vranken?], his wife. Children: Rachel, b. March 12, 1772; Marytie, b. January 24, 1766; Rebecca, b. September 14, 1768; Hester, b. July 16, 1771; Pieter, b. August 18, 1777.

The same work states that

Pieter Bogardus, mariner, married Wyntie Cornelis Bosch, daughter of Cornelis Teunise Bosch and Maritie Thomas Mingael. (Bogardus died in 1708.)

The city of New York has publisht "Records of New Amsterdam," as the city was named, translated from the original Dutch. In Volume III of these records, among the "Minutes of the Court of Burgomasters and Schepens of New Amsterdam," is found the following. In the same Minutes mention is made of Albert Bos or Bosch, and of Hendrick, Jan, Jan Jansen and Pieter Cornelisen Bos:

Sept. 27, 1658: Pieter Cornelisen Bos of Pumerlant, ship carpenter, appears in Court exhibiting certain writing of procuration under signature, and not notarial, of Philip Schoerlemaar, dated 24 April, 1658, in virtue of which he demands from Lauwerens Jansen the sum of fl. 650. Holland Currency, which the aforementioned Lauwerens Jansen rec<sup>d</sup> on bottomry from the abovenamed Philip Schoerlemaar. Lauwerens Jansen appears



in Court; admits that he the fl. 650 rec<sup>d</sup> on bottomry and says the curators shall regulate the estate, from which the fl. 650 may be paid. The Court decree, as Lauwerens Jansen has rec<sup>d</sup> fl. 600 from the estate in beavers, that he shall bring and pay to the curators the fl. 600 in beavers, and collect with the curators the remaining debts, from which the abovenamed Pieter Cornelisen Bos may be paid.

The last paragraf above is notable chiefly for the mention of the occupation of Pieter Cornelisen Bos as a ship-carpenter and the reference to "bottomry." These suggest a possible connection with the "three navigators" mentioned by Miss Marie S. Avery, on page 20.

In a list of early immigrants to New Netherlands ("New York Genealogical and Biographical Record," Vol. IV, page 183) are the following:

Bos, Cornelis Teunissen, 1681.

Bos, Hendrick, from Leyden, wife and two children, December, 1659.

Bosch, Jan, from Westphalen, September 2, 1662.

I gather a few bits of information from D. T. Valentine's History of New York City, published by G. P. Putnam & Co. in 1858. Among the owners of houses and lots about the year 1674, at the time of the final cession to the English, was

Henry Bosch, Dutch.

Among the inhabitants of the city in 1708 were:

Bos, Peter, 1 male, 1 female, 3 children.

Bos, Jan Pietersen, 2 males.

Bos, Hendrick, 1 male, 1 female, 4 children.



Among the members of the Dutch Church, New York, in 1686, were

Hendrick Bosch, *en zyn huys vrouw*, Egbertje Dirksen.

Among the "small burghers" in New Amsterdam (New York), in 1651, was

Jacob Will van der Bos, mason.

Some months ago, an enthusiastic friend in London, Eng., who is connected with *Notes and Queries*, inserted in that periodical a copy of the printed slip which I have been sending out, asking for information; and to this I have had some replies. The first one, as nearly as I can make it out, — for the writing is of the vertical kind and very difficult to read, — is as follows :

WINDERMERE BANK, BOWNESS,  
Westmoreland, September 3, 1899.

Dear Sir: Seeing your query as to your ancestors, in *Notes and Queries*, I write to say that a Thomas Boyse married Berners Preston, of Watlington Hall, Norfolk, and has one son, Augustus Freeman, born September 26, 1822.

Thomas Boyse, great-grandson of Nathaniel Boyse, settled in Westford 1781, and purchased the estate of Bannow. He married Margaret Jackson. His son, Samuel, married Dorothy Carew, and had Thomas (his heir), Shaft and Richard. His son married Jane Stratford, but he had no children, so was succeeded by his brother.

Is this any guide to you?

Faithfully yours,

ELISE A. STRONG.

The following would seem to add to the chances of variation in the form of our family name. That of Bass is not infrequent in this country, or in this city,



some of its members having acquired considerable prominence :

28 ANGEL HILL, BURY ST. EDMUNDS,  
SUFFOLK, September 10, 1899.

Dear Sir: Observing your note in *Notes and Queries*, asking for information about the Boss family, I just write to say that, in editing the Parish Register of Horningaheath, alias Horringer, two miles from this town, I have come across several entries of the *Bass* family in the eighteenth century, and one entry in the seventeenth century where it is written *Boss*. Two hundred years ago, when spelling was less fixed than it is now, the same name was often spelt sometimes with an *a*, sometimes with an *o*, and then as time went on would get fixed in one or in the other. It may, therefore, help you to find what you want if you know that your name is probably the same name as Bass.

I do not see any William and Sylvia in the Horringer Registers. The Bass entries lie between 1699 and 1786.

Yours truly, SYDENHAM HA. HERVEY.

So far as the American Bosses are concerned, I think Mr. Hervey's surmise is incorrect; for, somehow, — I can not tell why, — I *feel* that, in this case, at least, there is no connection between the names Boss and Bass.

Mr. R. A. Colbeck, a professional compiler of genealogies, etc., writing from London, Eng., under the date of October 2, 1899, makes some interesting suggestions, as follows :

Permit me to state, with regard to surname, — it is worth consideration, — that, even if the origin is *proved*, it can only be a very small matter of interest, and would certainly not assist in the least with regard to tracing family history.



Should such origin be simply traditional—the fact remains that all matters of tradition must be eliminated from genealogy, as this science must rest upon facts alone—any such tradition can not truly be termed “bits of family history.”

The only correct way to compile and *prove* a pedigree is to commence with the earliest members contained in the family history in hand, and to trace *back*, step by step, viz., generation by generation, and supply incontrovertible proofs of result, by extracts from records, registers, wills, etc.

A few years ago a friend pickt up in a bookstore in this city, and presented to me, a copy of the second edition of Goold Brown's “Grammar,” publisht about 1832 (for the title-page is missing and only the certificate of copyright remains to fix the date). On the inside of the cover is written, in a childish hand, “Susan A. Boss' Book, Clarkson, N. Y.” The same name occurs in other parts of the book, and once that of “Julia D. Boss;” and in one instance the words “Clarkson Colage,” signifying that there may, sometime, have been a college there, tho I have been unable to find any mention of it in the only local history that I could get access to. There has never been a Susan or a Julia in any branch of the family which I have known, or in any of the collateral branches. I have written to several parties at both Clarkson and Brockport, but, tho I inclosed stamps for return postage, I have received no reply. This, by the way, is not an unusual experience with me.

Clarkson is a little place of about three hundred inhabitants, in Monroe County, N. Y., a few miles from Rochester, the county seat, and about three



miles from Brockport. A few days since, I met, in a restaurant, a gentleman (a stranger) who had lived and done business in Brockport for several years, and who said that he had married his wife at Clarkson. I thought I would certainly get some information from him; but, alas! he had never even heard of the name Boss.

You have on a previous page given me the autograph of one of your ancestors. I take pleasure in presenting here a facsimile of the entry in my old family Bible of the marriage of my grandfather and grandmother, which was solemnized almost a hundred and five years ago. The record is in the bold handwriting of my grandfather, and was probably made between

*Mr. C. & Leah Boss.*  
*Oct 14<sup>th</sup> 1795.*

1826 and 1830, as the book was published in the former year. The leaf on which the record is made is stained by time, but the writing is scarcely dimmed at all. It is evidently the work of one accustomed to the use of the pen. The worst fault in it is the careless manner in which the name "Leah" is written, causing it to appear like "Loah."



From a record of the Wilkinson Family I learn that Hon. M. S. Wilkinson married a Sally Boss—only this, and nothing more. Morton Smith Wilkinson was born at Skaneateles, N. Y., in the central part of that State, January 22, 1819. He settled in Minnesota in 1847, and in 1859 was elected United States Senator, holding that position until 1865. He served in the lower house of Congress from March 4, 1869, until March 3, 1871. Mr. Wilkinson died some years ago. One of his grandsons lives in Minnesota, but, tho I have written him, explaining the object of this inquiry, he makes no sign, and I am left in the dark on those points concerning which I most desired information.

“The Germans (including the Dutch and Swiss and a few Huguenots) were practically the only ‘foreigners’ in colonial times. In 1727 a law was passed requiring them to take the oath of allegiance. All males of and above sixteen years of age were compelled to do this.”\* The lists of the names of these foreigners have been compiled, indexed and published as Vol. XVII, Second Series, Pennsylvania Archives. From this volume I have gathered a few items that may sometime be of interest to us.

The word “qualified” herein refers to the taking of the oath of allegiance to King George and the Prov-

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\*Letter of Rev. A. Stapleton, A. M., M. S., in the *Chicago Daily News*.



ince of Pennsylvania, which, it seems, was required of all foreigners immediately upon their arrival here :

List of foreigners imported in the ship *Two Brothers*, Thomas Arnott, Master, from Rotterdam. Qualified October 13, 1747.

Johannes Bosch.

List of foreigners imported in the ship *Peggy*, James Abercrombie, Commander, from Rotterdam, last from Plymouth. Qualified September 24, 1753.

Franz Joseph Boss.

Foreigners imported in the ship *Nancy*, Capt. John Ewing, from Rotterdam, took and subscribed the usual oath and declaration on Saturday, the 14th of September, 1754. [Inhabitants of Lorain.]

Christian Boss.

List of foreigners imported in the ship *Sally*, John Osmond, Commander, from Rotterdam. Last from Portsmouth, Eng. Qualified August 23, 1773.

Johan Christoph Boss.

List of foreigners imported in the ship *Union*, Andrew Bryan, Captain, from Rotterdam, last from Cowes. Qualified September 30, 1774.

Jacob Boss.

List of passengers per the ship *Tom*, Capt. F. R. C. Permein, Master, from Hamburg. Arrived October 12, 1802.

Johan Gotfried Bosse.

In the Newberry Library, in this city, is a quaint volume, printed in Dutch, entitled "*Leeven en Daden Der Doorbuchtigste Zee-Helden en Outdeckers van Landen, Deser Euwen.*" Written by Lambert van den Bos, 1610-98. Printed at Amsterdam 1676.

In Rose's Biographical Dictionary, publisht in London in 1858, I find the following :



BOS, the surname of some Dutch artists. *Jerome*, called also *Bosche*, born at Bois-le-Duc, about 1470, excelled in painting specters and other supernatural subjects, which generally offended by their extravagance, in spite of a free hand and skilful coloring, that give them considerable value as works of art. He has, however, so painted some serious subjects as to avoid his faults, and yet exhibit the excellence really belonging to him. He was likewise an engraver, and died about 1530.—*Lewis Jansen*, also born at Bois-le-Duc, but rather earlier than the preceding, became eminent for painting flowers, fruits and plants, ordinarily grouped in glasses, or vases of crystal, half filled with water. He died in 1507.—*Gasper Vanden*, a marine painter, born at Hoorn, in 1634, is distinguished by a light free touch, a pleasing tint of color and an artful manner of handling. He died in 1666.

The same work gives Lambert Bos, born November 23, 1670, at Warcum, in Friesland (in the Netherlands), who became eminent as a scholar.

On page 112, in the list of members of the Dutch Church in New York, I should have inserted :

Albert Bosch, *en zyn vrouw huys*, Elsje Blanck.

It seems to me that all the information I am able to gather is of a fragmentary, "patchwork" character. It is possible, however, that some of these odd bits may afford clues to matters of much greater importance. But—are we any nearer a solution of the problem than when we began?

I shall await your next letter with much interest, and hope that I may sometime be able to present something of greater value than I have hitherto.

Yours very truly, HENRY R. BOSS.



*William Graham Boss to Henry R. Boss.*

EDINBURGH, April 5, 1901.

Mr. Henry R. Boss, Chicago.

Dear Sir: Your lengthy letter came to hand a considerable time since. Our friend Dr. Larison, in his communication, places on a sound basis, so far, the source from which his friends of the name are derived. It appears, from what you have written and collected, and from what I have learned otherwise, to be the general impression in America that the name is originally German or Dutch; but I hope our correspondence will go to show that it is not necessarily so, being found at least as early as 1298, however sooner, in England under the spelling "Bosse," and later in Scotland. Our correspondence will also show little or no reason for doubt but that the name has had a variety of origins. I will give the traditional account of the name and its origin in Scotland as transmitted by my ancestors; but before proceeding with this it would be as well to devote a few lines to the "Bois" family in Scotland, which I have hitherto confined myself to the consideration of, as from my enquiries I find a pretty general impression here that "Boss" is believed to be derived from "Bois;" but of the fact I have not found any evidence whatever, as applied to a surname, excepting only in relation to a place name to be presently mentioned.

In the list at page 85, two of the name "Boys,"



belonging to Lanarkshire, are on record in 1296. They held a small estate in the parish of East Kilbride at that time, and from whom their lands took the name of "Boysfield." Not that they gave the place this name themselves; but most likely it would be given to their possession by neighbouring inhabitants, in much the same way as a farm in the state of Minnesota, belonging to my cousin Andrew Boss, son of Andrew Boss and Jane Nicol of La Prairie, Rock County, Wisconsin, was called "Boss' Corner" by people in the district. As it was a stopping-place for stage-coaches a generation since, this would possibly lead to the designation, in a colloquial manner.

This place in Lanarkshire provides a good example of the changes which names undergo in the course of time: In 1416 the name is Boysfeld; in 1502-4 it is Boysfeild and Boyisfeld; about 1640 and 1680 it has become Bosfeld; before 1793 it has settled into Bossfield, and retains this form until the present time.

So far as I have seen, the early Boys proprietors do not appear to have continued long in possession, as a part of it belonged to another family in the year 1416, and it had again changed hands previous to 1502. And there is no record of anyone of the name Boss having belonged to the parish or district at any time. Mr. Ure, who was the parish clergyman, gives a list of the surnames in the district when he wrote his History of East Kilbride about 1790, and this one is not among them; neither do the parish records,



which go back to 1688, record any of this surname. The name Galt, as we have seen connected with our name in fiction, is found in the parish and neighbourhood at the end of the eighteenth century; and in all probability the author of "The Town Drummer" borrowed his name for the character from this place.

From enquiry and consideration of the history of our name in Scotland I think the true explanation of the origin and source of the name, as borne by those in or from Scotland, who are all descended from one common ancestor, must lie with the traditional account as handed down by my ancestors. I confess that I was rather skeptical of it at one time, but, since looking into the matter, and having found other traditions in the family to be substantially correct, I see no reason to doubt the general accuracy of the tradition, especially in the light of the evidence in regard to the history of the name which I have been able to collect.

The traditional account is that the name was originally Boswell, or more probably Bosswell, as it used to be very often written, and that they had been settled in the western district of Fifeshire for many generations, where they possessed lands from father to son, for three or four hundred years, on the terms that it was to be theirs so long as grass grew and water ran, and so long as it continued in the family name by lineal succession. This latter provision might mean that if the male line failed the property would return to the superior, or that the husband of



an heir female would be required to take the family name.

In the course of time it happened that a near neighbour and kinsman, traditionally spoken of as "The Laird," who, my grandmother used to say, was named David Bosswell, and my ancestor, also named David Bosswell, were, through dwelling in the same locality, often mistaken for one another by the post officials, who are said to have sent up the letters, etc. in a bag once a week, the letters for one being delivered to the other, and vice versa. To put a stop to the inconvenience caused by this misdelivery of letters, etc., it was agreed that my ancestor should drop the second syllable of his name and use only the first one, which his descendants have continued to use, with some exceptions to be mentioned further on. Thus it comes about that another saying in my family, that all the Scotch Bosses are related to one another, just means that they are all descended from this one common ancestor who changed his name. I have not ascertained when the change took place, but I suppose, from the comparative freshness of the tradition, and considering the political and social state of this country during the second half of the seventeenth century, that the change was made about that time. Our tradition points to an ancestor immediately before my great-grandfather, David Boss, 17..-1789, perhaps his father, as the one who made the change. And I suppose, from the traditional account, that they would be portioners or vassal kinsmen to the Laird, the chief



of the name designed of Balmuto, in the parish of Kinghorne; as it was a common practice in bygone times for the younger sons of the chief house to be provided with a portion of land, or a farm, to enable them to make a living for themselves. There were three David Bosswells, or Boswells, lairds of Balmuto in succession between the years 1621 and 1705; and from a consideration of the circumstances I am inclined to think the change was made in the time of the last of these Davids—1667–1705. This is borne out by other coincidences which I will put shortly. On reference to the rise of the postal service in Scotland, we find that before the middle of the seventeenth century there was very little postal service; anything before that time was sent by the ordinary carriers of goods, or by a special messenger, or by a friend traveling that way as is sometimes still done. From 1635 till 1658 the posts were in a spasmodic state, but from this latter year improvements in the service were introduced from time to time, although it was a monopoly in private hands till the year 1695, when an act of Parliament was passed establishing a general post office at Edinburgh, with branches to be erected throughout the country as occasion offered. Another coincidence tending to place the change about the end of the seventeenth century is found in the spelling of the name as Bosswell, the latest instance of this occurring, so far as I am aware, in the same year that the post office was established, and found in the register of the will of John Mure, ship captain,



Leith, and Isobel Bosswell, his spouse, dated 15th April, 1695. Isobel was a family name, and my great-grandfather also had a daughter so named.

As showing how the tradition has been kept alive in the family, I remember my father telling me that about 1820, when his father was thinking of removing from Sunnyside farm, in the parish of Saline, at the approaching expiry of the lease, he was offered the farm of Bandrum, in the same parish, by the proprietor, at a fixed rent, to him and his heirs for as long as grass grew and water ran, and so long as the family name continued in succession. Somehow he did not accept this offer, but removed to the farm of Over Dalkeith (situated in a hilly country and so named to distinguish it from Lower or Nether Dalkeith), in the adjoining parish of Fossoway, Perthshire, where he finished his earthly career in 1837, and was interred in Saline churchyard beside his kindred. His wife, Margaret Graham,—twin daughter of David Graham in Bellsdyke, parish of Airth, Sterlingshire, by his first wife, Lily Boyd,—survived him for about twenty-five years, and was buried in the same ground, where their monumental stone bears record along with other stones of their kindred. My grandfather had the reputation in his day of a capable farmer and being particular to have all his affairs decently in order, and while still in the flesh he secured a last resting-place for himself and his beloved wife, as the headstone is dated 1817, the year of its erection. I give herewith a facsimile of his signature, from his



last Disposition and Settlement, executed at Dunfermline on the 29d September, 1886, when he was about eighty years of age. The settlement is too long

*William Boswell*

to quote here with its various provisions for the disposition of his estate and provision for his wife. But his signature may interest some of his descendants on your side of the great pond.

A genealogical account of the Boswells of Balmuto, Fifeshire, formerly the chief of the name here, was given by Sir Robert Douglas, in his *Baronage of Scotland*, published in 1798; but in the early generations, besides other errors, there is no proof of the succession as given by him. Although their numbers, so far as recorded, are not great in the twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, they are found in sufficient numbers, and in a variety of positions, to give rise to doubt in family succession, in absence of written evidence. But there is no doubt that those of the name in the south of Scotland belonged to the same family stock.

From an examination of the name Boswell in Scotland it appears that our abbreviation of the name was simply an adoption of the ancient practice of contracting the name in written records, and anciently it was also a heraldic practice for bearers of



the name to carry on their shields an allusive figure, as denoting the first syllable of their family name, But this will be better understood if I give a sketch of the name from its first appearance in our island, and it will be seen that changes in the name are not a new thing.

Like the Bois family and many others, the Boswells are descended from one or more of the numerous adventurers who came over with William Duke of Normandy in 1066, or soon thereafter. This was a land for colonization at that time, and doubtless many would arrive at intervals during the Norman period. In M. Leopold de Lisle's list of the chief men who accompanied Duke William, two of the names are mentioned under what evidently was a place-name; their names are Guillaume de Biville and Hanfroie de Biville. Perhaps they were from one of the places of this name, in the district between Rouen on the Seine and Dieppe on the coast, Saint Valery, the port of embarkation, occupying a position in the same neighborhood.

Boville as a place-name is also found in the same district, and probably gave rise to a separate surname; we will take note of the arms of this name presently. And of course many came over of whom there is no record of when they first landed on this island, both before and after the Conquest in the latter part of the eleventh century. Soon after the Norman settlement, the names "de Bevill," "de Boevill," "de Bovile," etc. are found spread over England in



various parts of the south and west and Yorkshire in the north ; passing from thence into the southern parts of Scotland, where the name first makes its appearance in record about the middle of the twelfth century.

In the history of Scotland this was a period of great change, owing to the policy of King David the first, when Prince of Cumberland, and afterward as King of Scots. It was under his auspices that so many Normans and English settled in the lowlands of Scotland, and when he founded and endowed so many bishopricks and religious houses ; the princely and kingly example being followed by his nobles and others, as was the pious custom for some ages after his time, even to excess. We shall find the early Boswells, in common with others, following this fashion and giving of their substance for the support of the religious.

One of the first Boswells in point of time referred to in record occurs in the Register of Kelso Abbey, where a Pagani de Bosseuilla makes a donation, or gift, to the Abbey, of one bovat, or an oxgate of land, which amounts to thirteen acres, lying in the parish of Edenham, the modern Ednam, in the Merse, Berwickshire, close by Kelso, on the north side of the River Tweed, about half way between Kelso and the village of Ednam. Along with others, this donation is recorded in the transcript of a charter of confirmation, granted by King William the Lion, after his accession to the throne of Scotland in 1165, confirming gifts made to the Abbey by his grandfather King Da-



vid and his brother King Malcolm, and others, previous to his accession; although this charter is undated, it would probably be granted soon after he became King, as the monks are said to have been very careful to obtain confirmation of their possessions from each new sovereign without undue delay. And the position which the record of the gift occupies, in the list of donations, in the charter—occurring, as it does, among those first mentioned as belonging to the Abbey—favours a very early date for the time when the gift was made. Kelso Abbey was founded there about 1126, and the Abbey Church about two years later, by King David of pious memory. There are no remains of the Abbey buildings surviving to our time; but from the stately fragment of the church remaining to this day, we gather that the architecture is mixed in style, although chiefly Norman in its main features of massive strength and endurance and severity of decorative portions; passing into the more graceful first pointed, or Early English style, typifying a period of transition in stone and mortar, and coincident with the changes which the Norman names were undergoing during the same era, when a collateral welding process was taking place among the various peoples in the country, Saxons, Scots, Normans, English, etc., who had settled there under David, our first feudal King.

The spelling of the name in this transcript represents the orthography of the time when the register was made from the original document, and the time



of the transcript has been found by the editor of the record to be of the first quarter of the fourteenth century. The original spelling, in all likelihood, would be more akin to the following example of the name from the same neighbourhood, and of the same period, but from the contemporary original record.

About 1164-74 the *Liber de Mailros* records the earliest instance of the abbreviated form of the name, so far as I have seen, when a "dd de boiu'," or David de Boiul, witnesses a charter of lands in Teviotdale, lying just under the Merse, the river Tweed running between the two, and the Teviot emptying its waters into the Tweed at Kelso. The lands witnessed to, in this charter, are situated to the east of Jedburgh, in the parishes of Hownam and Morebattle; and I would note here the early occurrence of the name near Jedburgh, in Teviotdale, and its form, as it foreshadows a variety of the name to be found in the succeeding centuries; also the Christian name of this witness is noteworthy, being the first occurrence of David, suggesting the influence of King David on the colonists whom he was the means of planting in this district, and it would be quite natural for a colonist of this time to call one of his sons after his benefactor. From a consideration of these two early instances of the name I am inclined to place the arrival of the name in the district during the first thirty years of the twelfth century.

The next bearer of the name found connected with Teviotdale is Robert de Boseuill or Bosuile, as



his name is variously written, between the years 1175 and 1188, who appears to have been a man of position in this district, as a juryman and as a witness to various important matters. Then we require to pass over a few years until about 1224, when we have a Henry de Boyville witnessing a charter of the lands of Lesseline, Aberdeenshire, granted by John, Earl of Huntingdon, in England, which was an appanage of the Scottish crown at this time; he was a great-grandson of King David the First, and the grantee was Norman, son of Malcolm, who became the progenitor of the Leslie, who afterwards took the name of this property as their family surname, and became the Leslies of that ilk. The place where this charter was granted is not mentioned, but most of the witnesses appear to be Scotsmen—one of them named “de Lamberton,” apparently of the place so called in the Merse, Berwickshire. And this Henry may be the party referred to by Nisbet, the great Scottish herald, who, writing about 1720, says that he had seen a charter of the lands of Oxmuir, in the Merse, in favour of the Boswells, of the time of King Alexander the Second, 1214–49, but whom he does not particularize. How long they possessed lands at Oxmuir I do not know, but we will find the name there again. Meanwhile, to preserve the chronological order, let us pass into the adjacent county of Dumfries.

In Annandale, at the court of Sir Robert Brus, lord thereof, we have, on July 29, 1249, as a witness to a grant of lands, William de Boyville, who proba-



bly was the progenitor of the Boyils of Whamphry, and of an Eanustace de Bovile in the same locality, to be mentioned about the end of this century.

It would appear as if this Annandale family were a branch from the de Bovylls who settled near Carlisle, in Cumberland, between 1100 and 1135, and had the barony of Levington, from which they took the name "de Levington," laying aside their own patronymic. They seem to have been on friendly terms with the Bruce family, as they are found witnessing documents in favor of the Bruces, lords of Annandale, etc., between 1194 and 1219. The first of the Levington family was Richard de Boyville, who, or his successor, changed his name to "de Levington." Others of the name we find in the same county afterwards, as about 1204 a William de Beville takes part in a judicial matter at a court held at Carlisle; in 1212 Robert de Boivilla witnesses a grant of lands to Furness Abbey; then on August 18, 1268, William de Boyville, freeman of Cumberland, serves as a juror; and after this the name becomes more numerous there.

In Yorkshire, again, the name appears to have obtained a footing before it passed into Cumberland. The Bruce family held large estates in Yorkshire, and doubtless many of the Norman settlers would find their way north along the great Roman highways, one of which passed through Annandale, where the name "street" is still applied to the main highway; another of these highways, called Watling Street, passed north from York by Boroughbridge, through Northumber-



land into Teviotdale, passing Jedburgh and Roxburgh, on into Lothian. Another Roman road ran north from Carlisle, in Cumberland, on the west, through Ayrshire, to the vicinity of Glasgow, where we shall also see a branch of the family settled before the middle of the thirteenth century.

Now, returning to the southern district of Scotland, at the county town of Peebles, on July 4, 1259, at an inquisition held there on certain lands, before the justices of Lothian, we have a Roger de Bodevill serving as a juror. If I mistake not, the third letter of the name is a clerical error, and perhaps he is the same person who is placed third in Douglas' account of the family.

Passing to the Merse again, we learn from Kelso Abbey rent-roll, drawn up in 1290, and the earliest rent-roll which has been preserved till our time, that William de Bosuile, of the parish of Hume, paid an annual rent of two shillings and six pence, two hundred eggs, and four days' work. This would be for lands held by him there—in all likelihood the farm of Oxmuir, extending at the present day to a little over two hundred acres. The modern farmstead stands close by the site of a previous one, and I am informed that an ancient setting of small causeway stones has been come upon about five feet under the present surface, on the old site. There used also to be a number of very old trees close to the farm—a sure sign of long-continued occupation; but they were all blown down about twenty years ago, during a great storm.



The situation of Oxmuir is on a southern sunny slope, about six hundred feet above the sea level, from which a great expanse of the Merse is beheld, with Kelso lying at the base, about five miles distant, on the river Tweed, and beyond it Teviotdale.

And passing into Teviotdale, we find the Bishop of Carlisle, in July, 1293, empowering the Abbot of Jedburgh to absolve the clergy within his jurisdiction who had been excommunicated for delaying to pay the tenth granted for the crusade to the Holy Land, proclaimed at this time; and in September following the Bishop reports that one William de Boyvill has obdurately sustained a sentence of excommunication for forty days and more, and asking the aid of the secular power to enforce payment. Generally the Scots at this time appear to have been very unwilling to pay this tax, as this same Bishop made another effort, two years after, to recover tenths still unpaid. But of how William finished his resistance to this impost there is no record. It required no little courage to withstand an all-powerful, despotic church, in such a superstitious age, in this country, and we can hardly realize the effect of church thunder on all the relations of the offender who came under the ban of the church; it was a strict boycott of him and his, in every way.

This member of the family appears to have been a man of substance in the neighbourhood of Jedburgh, and I take him to be a descendant of David de Boivil, already mentioned in the same locality in the previous century; and it is worth while to note the spelling of



the name in both cases, as we shall have occasion to mention him again.

We have now arrived at the time when armorial evidence becomes available, so let us look at the heraldic figures of the early bearers of the name. By the middle of the thirteenth century the name generally has become somewhat more bovine in the spelling, leading the old bearers to indulge in allusive or cant-

Beovill, Cornwall, England, 1281-90.



Argent, a bull passant gules.

ing armorials, and no doubt the armorial figures would have a strong reflex influence on the name. We will begin with the English families, as they were the earliest settlers in this country; and we find in Tristram Risdon's notebook, compiled early in the seventeenth century, that Radolphus Beovill, of Cornwall County, between 1281 and 1272, carried: Argent, a bull passant gules. And Sir Reginaldus Beavill of Gwarnock, in the same county, about 1289-90, also carried the same arms. A later variation of this armorial, borne by the same name in England, is, Ermine, a bull passant gules, armed and unguled Or.

In Suffolk, again, those of the name Bovill, as William de Bovill bore on his seal, between 1272 and 1307, a shield quarterly—probably, Quarterly Or and sable; as one of this name, in the same county, in a roll of arms compiled between 1308-14, had his arms blazoned quarterly in these tinctures. Other mem-



bers of this family carried the quarterly shield, with variations in the arrangement of the tinctures, such as sable and Or, argent and sable, etc. In a few instances they used a bull passant quarterly sable and Or, as a crest; this is just the conventional heraldic treatment of a black and semi-yellow coloured bull, and the shield quarterly represents, in heraldic manner, the particoloured tough bull's hide spread over its surface, as was the ancient practice with some peoples to cover their war shields with the hides of animals. So far as I have seen, those of the name Bovill never carried the bull on their shields, and, although the quarterly coat is allusive to their name, yet in all likelihood they were of different descent from those of the name Biville or Beville, etc.

Boville, Suffolk, England,  
1272-1314.



Quarterly Or and sable.

Returning now to Scotland, we have come to the period of the great Ragman Roll, or roll of landowners, and other men and women of importance, in Scotland, who swore fealty to King Edward the First in 1296. In this roll, recording all who gave their oath of allegiance at Berwick on Tweed, are six of the name, three of whose appended seals have come down to our time. Their names as entered in the roll are: Robert de Boyville, del counte de Are, whose seal is described as bearing on a shield a bull's head cabossed, with the legend, "S' Rob'ti de Boyvilla;" William de



Boseville, del counte de Roxburgh, on whose seal is the same charge, a bull's head cabossed, and the legend, "S' Will'i de Boyville." Seals at this time do not show the heraldic colours of the shields, but in heraldic practice these two shields would be differenced in the colouring. Also in heraldic law, the head, when

Boyville, Roxburgh and  
Ayrshire, Scotland, 1296.



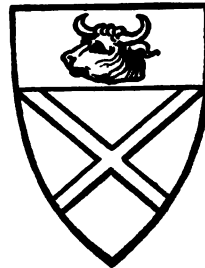
A bull's head cabossed.

shown on a shield, is held to represent the whole animal, in much the same way as, in portraiture, the head indexes the whole person. And please note the variation in spelling of the name of this Roxburghshire representative, whom I take to be the same man that we have seen defying the church in

1298, near Jedburgh, Teviotdale.

Eustace de Boyville, del counte de Dunfres, whose seal bears, a saltire and on a chief a bull's head coupéd fessways, with the legend, "S' Eustacii de Boiwill." This is the representative of the Annandale branch of the name, already mentioned in 1249; and they are said to have continued, in the main line, in possession of the property at Whamphrey, till the year 1518, when an heir female married into the Johnston family and carried the property with her.

Boiwill, Dumfriesshire,  
Scotland, 1296.



A saltire, and on a chief a  
bull's head coupéd fess-  
ways.

The other three, whose seals have not come down



to us, are: William de Boseville, del counte de Berwyke—the same, in all probability, who is mentioned in Kelso Abbey rent-roll of 1290, and of the parish of Hume, in that county; Richard de Boyville, del counte de Are; and another William de Boseville, burgess of Roxburgh, acting in his official capacity of councillor, together with the alderman and other ten councillors, who take the oath of fealty on behalf of the community and town of Roxburgh, in token whereof they affix the burgh seal. And perhaps a seventh representative in the person of William Bule, del counte de Are.

The various spellings of the name are worthy of note, as they indicate the forms it was to assume after this time, in the various branches settled in different localities of Scotland. There were three main branches: One settled in Teviotdale and the adjoining Merse, one in Annandale and one in Ayrshire.

The Ayrshire and Annandale families both appear on record about the middle of the thirteenth century, in their respective localities; and a peculiarity in the spelling of their name, so far as I have seen, is the absence of the letter *s*, and in the course of time it easily slipped into one syllable, as we find it written, in 1362, Boyll; in 1367, Boyuil; in 1460, Thomas Bullyn, the canon of Glasgow, bears a bull's head cabossed on his seal; in 1482, Boyle; in 1500, Boyl; in 1512, Boyle. The chief family of the name in Ayrshire were the Boyvils of Caulburne, or, as it has become modernly, Boyle of Kelburn, in the district of Cunningham, North Ayrshire. They were advanced to



the peerage in the seventeenth century, as Earls of Glasgow, and they still are proprietors of Kelburn, which they have held at least from the middle of the thirteenth century. Their family arms are: Or, three bucks' horns gules; and, allowing for changes made in the course of time, possibly these tinctures would be the heraldic colours of Robert de Boyvil, the bearer of the bull's head cabossed in 1296.

Returning to Teviotdale, in the county of Roxburgh, where we have seen the name on record between 1164 and 1175, under the contracted form "de Boiu'," or de Boiuill, and finding the name on the seal in 1296 as de Boyvile, with the bull's head cabossed as armorial bearings, I think there is no doubt — even though we find one recorded in the same locality with the *s* in the name; or the Latinized form, which is easily accounted for by the clerkly habit of the scribe — but that the local pronunciation would be something like as if it had been spelled "Bule." Then, again, William de Boyvile, — to take the spelling on his seal, — of the county of Roxburgh or Teviotdale, swears fealty, in August, 1296, at Berwick, along with a small group of chief men from the same district, among whom are some well-known names in the section round Jedburgh, for centuries after this time; one of the best known being the Baron of Cavers, on the Teviot.

The heraldic bearing of the bull, or the bull's head, are arms parlantes, or arms hinting at the name of the bearer; and in the course of time the armorial figure would have some influence in chan-



ging the name as well as local habit of assimilating and slumping names. It was an old practice to speak of bearers of shields by the figures they carried thereon; and we do not require to strain our imagination very much to suppose that the Teviotdale members of the family would be called Bule, which is just another form of Boyle, as now used by the Ayrshire branch, and as my own appears to be simply a Saxonized Latin shape of the first syllable of the original name, derived, in all probability, from the allusive armorial bearing, the figure apparently being looked on in a loose way, at this early time, as the head of a bull or of an ox. This way of speaking about people from the heraldic figures they bore is illustrated by the late sixteenth-century rhyming Scotch "Prophecie of Sybilla and Eltrain," so called, but actually owing its existence to political faction of that time. While its primary object was political, the composer of the lines made use of popular heraldic phraseology to indicate the persons to whom he refers :

"The Beares head and the Brock,  
the beame and the bloodie yoke,  
three Crescentes and a Cok  
Shall come from the North;  
they shall come to the broyle,  
And Knights keenely shall toyle,  
For loue of the sinkfoile,  
And fight upon Forth."

Without going into the details of the "Prophecie" I may indicate a few of the possible references. Thus



the bear's head is for Baron Forbes; the brock may be for Mackenzie, Baron of Kintail; the beam and bloody yoke for Hay, Earl of Errol; the three crescents for Seton-Gordon, Marquis of Huntly, "cock o' the north;" and the cinquefoil for the Lord Livingston. But, whatever the exact references may be, there is no doubt that the writer is indebted for his figurative allusions to the days of heraldic display and pageantry, when armorial bearings displayed in the field on banner or shield were enough to proclaim the presence of more or less distinguished names.

After the year 1296 the name de Boyville disappears from the vicinity of Jedburgh, to reappear in the neighbourhood of Selkirk in 1315, as Turnbull or Tornebule, and well on in this century, after undergoing this transformation, it again comes to light in the records as established near Jedburgh, where the name of Turnbull has always been most numerous, becoming

Turnbull Arms.



Argent, a bull's head cabossed sable, armed Or.

one of the strongest border clans of stark moss-troopers in Teviotdale. They continued to use the bull's head cabossed as their armorial ensign, as in 1439 John Turnbull, Bishop of Ross, and in 1451 William Turnbull, Bishop of Glasgow and founder of the University there,—both sons of Teviotdale families,—and Turnbull of Minto, Teviotdale, in 1455, all bore a bull's head cabossed on their shields. And then



some wealthy and pious one—or more probably a number of them, perhaps the whole clan,—contributes to build and restore a part of Jedburgh Abbey about 1480, when the family shield bearing the bull's head cabossed was placed on a buttress to commemorate their good work, as was the fashion of that time; remaining there to this day as a memorial of the name, buttressing the church which their predecessor of the year 1293 defied so obdurately. And here I would note the colouring of their armorial shields, namely, a white shield with the bull's head cabossed sable; so coloured in the oldest heraldic records, the *Armorial de Berry*, about 1450, giving three bulls' heads cabossed, two and one sable, armed Or; and the spelling of the name as *Tourneboulle*. These colours and those of the Fifeshire Boswells' arms are identical, although the figures are different, which will be seen when we come to consider them.

I am aware of the popular story of the origin of the name Turnbull, but it is very doubtful if it was applied to any other than the Philliphaugh family in Selkirkshire, unless the whole clan changed their name by prefixing the syllable *Turn*, in the fourteenth century; but the more likely way is that the first syllable would be floating among them for some time before it became fixed to the family name, and I am inclined to think it would originally be derived from a place-name. Perhaps the ancestor of the family who settled in Teviotdale in the twelfth century may have possessed lands called *Turn*, and his des-



cendants, as they multiplied toward the beginning of the fourteenth century, would be called Turn-Bouils, to distinguish them from their neighbours and kinsmen, the Boyuills or Bosseuyls of the Merse, or perhaps for some more local reason. There is at least one place in Teviotdale called Torn or Turn; and it was a common enough practice for a surname to be attached to a place-name by way of distinction. Just to mention one near Kelso, called Newton Don; this was originally the Newtown, or Little Newton, and after coming into the possession of a family named Don it got the addition of this family name, or colloquially the proprietor would be Newtondon.

Before quitting this matter I would note that the common pronunciation, in Teviotdale, of the name Turnbull is Trumell, and these are much farther removed from one another than Bule is from Boiul or de Boyvile, the original family name. Nisbet, the Scottish herald, in 1722, says the name of this family was Ruel originally, but he gives no authority for the statement.

Sweet Teyot,\* well do I remember the happy days of childhood on the banks of your clear stream, when I have bathed in thee, during summer's heat, and sported in the cold of winter on your frozen waters, and with childish awe beheld the rush of your torrents when in spate.†

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\* Local, Teyot = Teviot. † In sudden flood.



During the years immediately after 1296, William de Boseville, Burgess of Roxburgh, is frequently mentioned, witnessing various documents and transacting affairs, down to April, 1345; his name often being written "Bosseyll," the earliest instance of this occurring about 1328, and about this time the prefix "de" begins to be omitted. The town referred to at this time was old Roxburgh, situated opposite Kelso, at the confluence of the Teviot and Tweed rivers; it was one of the Four Boroughs, so distinguished through special privileges for trade and other matters. Not a vestige of the old town now remains, although it was a populous, thriving place in the time of our namesake, with full burghal equipment. Our Burgess appears to have been an influential man, figuring in most of the important affairs of the borough of his time, as a Councillor, and afterwards as Alderman or Mayor. His house was in one of the principal streets of the borough, called Market Street, and the scene of one of its special privileges, in the annual fair of St. James the Great, the patron saint of the borough, on whose festival day, July 25th, the fair opened, after due observance to St. James in the town church dedicated to him in April, 1134, where our Chief Burgess and his family doubtless worshipped; thereafter the Alderman would officiate at the opening ceremonies, surrounded with all the quaint paraphernalia and dignity of the time, in this ancient Royal Burgh, which, although now numbered with things that were, is still brought to remembrance by holding



the annual fair of St. James on the site of the ancient burgh. In conformity with his position as a man of substance, he had his own seal—an indispensable adjunct to a man of affairs in medieval Scotland. How I should have liked if an impression of his seal had come down to our time! About 1338, while he was Alderman, his wife, Isabella de Merlinton, gave one acre of land in Broxlawe, in the territory of Newton,—the modern Newton Don,—to the canons of Dryburgh Abbey, out of piety for the health of her own soul, and of her husband, her ancestors and successors. From this we learn that they had a family; and as one of the witnessing burgesses to documents, in the town, is William de Boseville, during the time our Alderman was in office, I am inclined to think we have a son of his also a Burgess of the town.

Also contemporary with the Councillor, in the town, we find one Alexander de Bos, or Bosville, as his name is entered in the contracted and full forms, in the Exchequer Rolls, recording the escheat of his goods to the King, and the amount of eleven pounds and ten shillings, as received therefor, by the Chamberlain of Scotland, who presided in the court, held at Roxburgh, while on his yearly eyre, or circuit journey, sometime between June, 1328, and December, 1329, when he visited the Royal Burgh and market town, and held a court to try certain causes pertaining to burghal law. This contraction of the name is found occasionally after this, and we have seen a very early example of it about 1164, in the same district,



and we shall refer to other instances, occurring after a similar interval of time. In what relationship this Alexander stood to the Alderman we have no evidence, but it is interesting to find so many of the family on record, connected with this ancient burghal community.

The places called Newton and Broxlawe lie about two miles north from Kelso, close to the Eden Water. Newton was originally in the parish of Edenham or Ednam, and had a chapel subject to the mother church of St. Cuthbert of Ednam. About the middle of the twelfth century, as already noticed, we have seen Pagani de Bosseuille gifting one bovate of land in this parish to the Abbey of Kelso; and where we find, at a later date, the family name apparently possessing lands in the same parish, as witness the pious donation of the Alderman's wife, in the gift of one acre of land lying here. And it also happens that, for upwards of three centuries after the date of Isabella's gift, lands lying in Newton were called Boswell's lands, so named in 1598; and again called Boswal-lands in 1642, and described as extending to two carucates, or two hundred and eight acres. Taking all the circumstances into consideration, so far as I have seen, this appears to have been the place where the name was first settled, north of the Tweed, early in the twelfth century.

Now to notice the remaining one named in the Ragman Roll of 1296, William de Boseville, of the county of Berwick. There is no doubt this is the



same that we have seen in the rent-roll of Kelso Abbey in 1290, as occupying lands in the parish of Hume, to the north of Kelso. And we have seen Nisbet, the herald, mention them there, in Oxmuir, between 1214 and 1249. The Boswells must have been settled here very early, as they also left their name behind them attached to lands in the parish; for by a retour of inquest, among the Earl of Home's MSS., dated 16th April, 1551, mention is made that the lands called Boswellands, in the town of Home, are held in chief of the Abbot and convent of Kelso, for service, and are valued at four pounds yearly. Then in 1605 the same lands are described as lying in the eastern part of the town of Hume, above Burrig, and extending to a husbandland, or twenty-six acres. The name, as applied to these lands, appears to be quite forgotten locally, but the field called the Burrigs is still pointed out; and from an examination of the ground this husbandland appears to lie to the north of it, and separated from Oxmuir, on the east, by the roadway. From these circumstances, probably, the husbandland would be the holding of a younger son of the family, unless it was a part of Oxmuir in their time.

The town of Home, or Hume, is a quaint old survival of a medieval village, and has been in a state of decay for many years; the houses nestling along the slopes, with their ancient gardens stretching behind them, containing visible evidence of the cultivation of many past generations, who lived in the village, and now sleep in St. Nicholas' churchyard under the



shadow of the rebuilt fragments of the ancient castle of the Lords of Home, which reared its massive walls on a craggy eminence, above the village inhabited by their retainers, and from its elevation dominated the whole Merse, or March.

Anciently the lands of Home belonged to the old Earls of Dunbar and March, the monks of Kelso obtaining a large part of them in the twelfth century; and about 1240 a descendant of a younger son of the Dunbar family, named William, acquired the barony of Home by marriage with his cousin, a daughter of the sixth Earl. He built the castle and was called William of Home; his descendants figuring in border affairs for many generations afterwards.

This seeming digression may afterwards help us to understand the armorial bearings of the Boswells of Fifeshire, who are said to be sprung from this particular branch, but there does not appear to be any proof of the fact, and all I can say is, a general statement has been current in our family that they originally came from the south of Scotland to Fifeshire; and their arms give colour to the conjecture that, while in the southern district, they were vassals of the old Earls of Dunbar and March.

In this connection it is interesting to find a Walter de Boseville, esquire, among the hundred and thirty Scots knights, esquires and others who were taken prisoners in the beginning of May, 1296, when the castle of Dunbar, which had been garrisoned by the Countess of Dunbar and March, was obliged to capit-



ulate to the besiegers through fortune of war. The prisoners were marched to Roxburgh or Marchmount\* Castle, and sent off from thence, in detachments, to various castles in England; two knights and four esquires, of whom Walter was one, being sent to Nottingham Castle, on May 16th of that year. He appears to have been kept in durance for a considerable time, as on November 23, 1298, the King orders the Sheriff of Nottingham to pay Michael Miggle and Walter de Boseville, esquires, Scottish prisoners in Nottingham Castle, three pence each, and their warder two pence, daily. Their fellow prisoners who were sent to this castle all appear to have been liberated before this time, which may be accounted for by a practice, in that age, of holding prisoners of war to ransom, and becoming part of the business of war, some captures proving a valuable reward for the risks of warfare. Walter does not appear to have been able to buy himself out of prison, as we again meet with him at the end of September in 1299, when the same Sheriff has a warrant for moneys paid to Walter de Bozeville, Michael de Miggle and Roger le Clerk, esquires, Scottish prisoners; and Michael is fortunate in getting deliverance from prison, leaving Roger, who had been transferred from another castle, to keep Walter company. How long after this he remained in prison, or if he sighed for a sight of the Merse land and his

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\*This is written Marchmound, Marchmont or Marchmount.



friends, does not appear by the hard, dry facts of record.

In 1329, the Exchequer Rolls record a payment of thirteen pounds six shillings and eight pence, as paid to William de Boswill, at Scone,—an ancient seat of the Scottish court, adjacent to the city of Perth,—on behalf of Sir Alexander de Setoun, a landowner in Lothian and Berwickshire, and four years after this Governor of the town of Berwick. We can not localize this member of the family, but he apparently was a trusted agent of the representative of one of the foremost Norman families in Scotland; and if he was not the Alderman of Roxburgh, or a son of his, most likely he would be a son of the Oxmuir or Hume family.

About the middle of the fourteenth century, or after 1345, the name disappears from the southern district of Scotland. Perhaps in these troublous times their fortunes had waned, and in consequence they would not be in a position to be placed on record. But the name does not appear to have died out altogether, as one representer, called Robin Boswel, is found witnessing a document in the vernacular, at Melrose Abbey, on the 21st of September, 1535. And here we would note the parish called St. Boswells, next to Melrose, a comparatively modern appellation, dating from the beginning of the seventeenth century, and named after St. Boisel, a seventh-century preacher here, but doubtless influenced by the surname in the district. Shortly before the middle of the fourteenth



century, when the name sinks out of sight in the Merse, or border district, it makes its first appearance on record in Fifeshire, and afterward the chief seat of the name.

We have now reached the period when the name first appears as settled in Fifeshire. Before proceeding to sketch the history of the name there, which I hope to do at another time, I will collect a fragment or two here in reference to matters mentioned in previous pages.

At page 117 you give the names of six sea captains as carrying settlers to the continent of America in the eighteenth century. The first three—Thomas Arnott, master of the *Two Brothers*; James Abercrombie, commander of the *Peggy*, and John Ewing, captain of the *Nancy*—are all bearers of Scotch names found in Fifeshire. I have already referred to the continual intercourse between the east coast of Scotland and the opposite coasts of Germany, Holland, France, etc., and it is interesting to find Scotch sailors engaged in trading between the continent of Europe and the New World. The names Arnott and Abercrombie are taken from places so named in Fifeshire, and I don't know if there may be any connection between Captain Arnott's *Two Brothers* and Captain Boss' *Three Brothers*, mentioned by you at page 21; but, curiously enough, the Arnott family and the Bosswells in Fifeshire had intercourse with each other in centuries past, for they were neighbours.



A correspondent informs me that the name Boss has been settled for many generations in the county of Essex, England. Also the names Boseville, Bosswell and Boyce are found on record in that county at various times, from early in the twelfth century downwards. And one of your correspondents conjectures the names Boss and Bass to be the same, as found in the adjoining county of Suffolk. Formerly these two names were spelled with a final *e*, as in the present-day place-name of Bosse Island, in the Cattegat, Denmark. So far as I have seen, the name in England appears to have been chiefly settled in the eastern and southeastern counties, and probably in most cases is of Teutonic origin; thus accounting for its being found spread over so great an area of western Europe, in Saxony, High Germany, as mentioned at page 106; and in the Netherlands, and the opposite coasts of England, where the Saxons at a very early period made settlements.

Then at page 25 mention is made of a Captain John George Boss, R. N.; and I am indebted to one of his descendants for a few details of his life. He was born at Beverly, Yorkshire, England, in 1785, of parents in very humble circumstances, and joined the Royal Navy when a lad. For his distinguished services he was promoted from time to time, becoming a Commander in 1811, and obtaining his Captain's commission in 1833. He served under Admiral Nelson, and took part in the battle of Trafalgar, on the 21st of October, 1805, where Nelson met his death on the



quarter-deck of the *Victory*. The King also recognized Captain Boss' services by presenting him some pieces of gold plate. After the passing of the Reform Bill in 1832, the Captain was elected to Parliament

Captain Boss' crest and motto.



"Out of a naval coronet, an arm, in hand a billet, all proper."

for Northallerton, in his native county.

I have pleasure in sub-joining Captain Boss' crest—which, I believe, commemorates an important act of service done by him—and his motto: EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS WORKS.

It appears the name is found in Yorkshire frequently, but as to its origin there I have no information. Whether derived from an early Saxon or Danish settler, or from the place called Bossall in that county, or whether it is the contraction for Bosswell, is undecided. There has been a long line of the Boswell family in Yorkshire, from the twelfth century downwards, and the name there has undergone various changes in the spelling, the contraction being made use of in records, if not in actual living intercourse.

I remain

Yours faithfully,

WM. GRAHAM BOSS.





*Henry R. Boss to William Graham Boss.*

CHICAGO, September 30, 1901.

Mr. William Graham Boss.

My Dear Sir: Over three years have now elapsed since this correspondence between us began. To me it has been a source of much pleasure. It has been extended far beyond any limits that either of us, probably, anticipated. I deeply regret that I have been able to contribute so little on my side; but I rejoice that you have gathered so much. I have, however, labored under great difficulties, a portion of which — unnecessary to mention here — I could not anticipate. In addition to being a very busy man, — all my waking hours being fully occupied with various affairs in addition to the everlasting bread-and-butter question and other cares, — I have for the greater part of the last half-century or more been absent from my birth-place and my native State, and hundreds of miles from the most likely sources of information, while the older members of my family — the conservators of the family traditions — have died and left no sign. Documentary sources of information have been out of my reach, even if any such exist.

The truth is, the pioneers in this country were too busy *making* history to be able to devote much time to the *writing* of it. Even when my father settled in the western part of the State of New York, which I think must have been about 1825-30, he was thought



to have gone beyond the bounds of civilization—to the then “Far West.” Of postal facilities there were few and the rates of postage so nearly prohibitory that communications between families so separated were, like angels’ visits, few and far between. Small wonder is it, then, that we have so few records from which to draw material for family histories!

Your theories regarding the origin of and the numerous changes in our family name seem to be fairly well supported by the facts you adduce. The meager records I have been able to find and the transcripts I have given therefrom would seem to indicate that like changes, tho not so numerous, have been going on in this country since the name was planted here. For instance, reference to the extracts from the Register of the Old Dutch Church at Kingston, N. Y., given on pages 56–64, shows the possibility, and even probability, of unlooked-for variations. The record of baptisms in the same church, referred to on page 65, discovers still worse variations, some of the later recorded names running into Terbosch—a name which would hardly be suspected of any relationship to Boss. If you are correct in your supposition that the name may even have been connected with the armorial bearings of the Turnbull family, we need not be surprised at any other of the numerous variations that you have recorded.

Dr. A. Hamilton, the well-known filologist and spelling-reformer, of Toronto, Ontario, Can., writes me as follows:



The name Boss does not occur in the Toronto Directory, but Bose, Bosco, Basco, Basso, Boyce, Boice. I know about nothing about it [the subject of our inquiry] myself. The two following facts may interest you:

1. A few words have come into *American* usage (as distinct from British usage). They are such words as *boss*, *span* and some others due to Dutch influence via "New Amsterdam." *Span*, above, means pair or team of horses.

2. When Peter the Great went incognito as a journeyman to work in Dutch shipyards, they called him "Peter bas," i. e., Master Peter. Probably he took on dominant attitudes and was of superior mental caliber. I gleaned this from Voltaire's *Life of Charles XII* (*Histoire de Charles XII*), which used to be a French reading-book in Ontario schools, in the fifties and sixties.

The name Bass is perhaps the same as Boss, being pronounced as in German.

It has been suggested that I give in this work the definitions of the term "boss" that are printed in our American dictionaries. Here are some of them:

Century Dictionary: [A word derived from the Dutch settlers in New York. D. *baas*, master, foreman.] 1. A master. Specifically: (a) One who employs or superintends workmen; a head man, foreman or manager. (b) In U. S. politics, an influential politician who uses the machinery of a party for private ends or for the advantage of a ring or clique; a professional politician having paramount local influence. 2. The chief; the master; the champion; the best or leading person or thing.

International Dictionary (Webster's): D. *baas*, master. A master workman or superintendent; a director or manager; a political dictator.

Standard Dictionary: D. *baas*, master. 1. A superintendent or employer of workmen; manager; foreman. 2. A



manager or dictator of a party organization, especially one who uses such leadership arbitrarily or for private or partizan purposes; the head of a "ring."

It will be observed that all these authorities give the Dutch word *baas* as the original of the term. The Century Dictionary, however, goes into the etymology more fully, and shows how the word has had or may have had other significations than those given above. The following is interesting :

Middle Dutch, *baes*, master of the house, also a friend; feminine, *baesinne*, mistress of the house, also a friend; cognate with Flemish *baes*, parallel with Low German *baas*, master, foreman (derived from Danish *bas*, master), parallel with Old High German *basa*, and with Middle High German *base*, feminine, aunt, German *base*, feminine, cousin (dialectically also aunt, niece), apparently ultimately identical with German *wase*, cognate with Low German *wase*, feminine, cousin, aunt. The word, in the masculine, seems to have meant "kinsman, cousin," and to have been used especially as referring to the master of the household, the chief "kinsman" in fact or by courtesy.

There are numerous other definitions of the word given in the dictionaries, several of them of a technical character, — as in architecture, bookbinding and other arts, — and others of an humorous kind.

I have been endeavoring to learn at what time my great-uncle, Peter Boss, settled in Western New York, but, so far, without success. Mrs. Mary A. Avery (mother of Miss Marie Avery, a letter from whom is printed on page 20) writes me from Utica, N. Y., as follows :



As to the time when my great-grandfather, Peter Boss, settled in Chautauqua County, I have no knowledge; but it must have been considerably over one hundred years ago.

It was in this Mohawk Valley that the Boss brothers settled, on lands deeded to them by the Indians. These lands were situated between the sites of Rome and Troy, N. Y. Grandmother Amy Boss Jackson has told me many a quaint story of their adventures and experiences. I greatly regret that I can not now recall any of them.

A few days since, I was reading the proof of a mailing-list for an outside party, and came across the name of Dunn, Boss & Co., at Milton, Wis. I at once wrote "Mr. Boss," and have received the following interesting and highly satisfactory reply:

MILTON, Wis., September 25, 1901.

Mr. Henry R. Boss, Chicago, Ill.

Dear Sir: While I was absent your letter came, and on my return it was not handed to me for several days; but I hope that what I have written will be of interest to you. I should judge that we come of the same stock.

My great-great-great-grandfather came from Holland. He was a sea-captain, and on his first voyage to this country landed at Newport, R. I. He was so well pleased with the country that he soon made another trip hither, bringing with him two brothers, one of whom settled at Narragansett and the other in New York State. My ancestor, whose name was Edward, settled in Newport; our family are descended from this one.

My great-grandfather married Eliza Liscom,\* who was of Irish descent. They had two daughters—Betsy and Polly;

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\*In the list of "American Descendants of Edward Boss," furnished by Mr. Robert P. Boss, of Boston, this name is given as Linscom. (See page 51.)

H. R. B.



also five sons. The sons were: Joseph, who was a baker; Edward and Philip, who were both officers in the navy; John was president of one of the Newport banks; and William, my grandfather Boss, who married Edith Dickinson Prior. My grandfather was born in 1768, his wife in 1778; they were married in 1798. They had fourteen children, as follows:

Eliza Liscom, b. August 11, 1794.  
 Christopher Prior, b. May 20, 1796.  
 Marthy Dickinson, b. November 20, 1797.  
 William Davis, b. April 10, 1799.  
 Thomas Liscom, b. April 28, 1801.  
 Sarah Prior, b. June 11, 1802.  
 Robert Prior, b. February 21, 1804.  
 Charles Prior, b. August 28, 1805.  
 John Henry, b. August 28, 1806.  
 Abbie, b. April 19, 1808.  
 Philip Martin, b. January 19, 1810.  
 Charles Dickinson, b. March 12, 1812.  
 Joseph, b. December 20, 1814.  
 Katherin Gardner, b. March 10, 1816.

Joseph Boss, my father, came from Newport, R. I., when a boy, and lived the rest of his life in Little Genesee, Allegany County, N. Y. He was married to Eliza Orandall December 25, 1839; they had two children — Susan Mariah Boss, b. July 7, 1842, and Martin Prior Boss, b. March 31, 1845. Susan M. married James Harry Ingraham, October 6, 1870, and they have made Providence, R. I., their home, where they run the Breezy Bluff House, a summer hotel; they have two children — Fred Fadden Ingraham, b. September 10, 1873, and Louis Harry Ingraham, b. May 8, 1879. Martin Prior Boss married Laura S. Gallagher, July 25, 1870; she died July 24, 1888. They had three children — Helen Winsmore Boss, b. June 10, 1874; Laura Boss, b. April 27, 1876 (and died in infancy), and Ira Crane Boss, b. December 3, 1877. Martin P. Boss has followed mining engineering, and is now President of the American Bank of the City of Mexico.



Eliza Crandall Boss died April 8, 1847. On August 17, 1848, my father was again married, this time to Eliza Wheeler. There was one child by this marriage — Frank Boss, b. November 5, 1852, and died June 29, 1887.

Eliza Wheeler Boss died February 7, 1857. My father then married my mother, Aurilla F. Rogers, May 3, 1858, who died at Milton, Wis., January 31, 1883. By this union there were three children — May Eliza Boss, b. April 27, 1859 (on November 28, 1888, she married John Cunningham, a lawyer of Janesville, Wis., and they have two children — George Rogers Cunningham and Robert John Cunningham); Mark Boss, b. March 25, 1862, died April 1, 1863; and George Rogers Boss, the writer, b. June 18, 1862.

I married Mrs. Stella Loofboro Perine, January 13, 1889. We have three children — Lela Aurilla, b. August 27, 1890; Joseph Kenneth, b. March 29, 1896; Malcolm Loofboro, b. June 16, 1900. I have been in the general merchandise business at Milton for eighteen years.

If there is anything more that I can tell you, I would be pleased to do so. Yours very truly, Geo. R. Boss.

Mr. Boss is clearly entitled to be classed among the American descendants of Edward Boss, and therefore can trace his lineage directly to the founder of one branch of the family in this country.

Taking my cue from the letter of Mr. Charles F. Boss, given elsewhere, I wrote to Mr. C. S. Boss, the Postmaster at Bossburg, Wash., and received the following in reply :

I am much pleased to know that one of the Boss family is looking up our ancestors.

My father's name was Truman. He had three brothers — George, Randle and Chester (my name). They originated in New York; that is, my father and mother came from New York



State. I know very little about the Bosses, as I was born in Michigan, near Jonesville. Then father moved to Wisconsin when I was three years old, and to Minnesota when I was eleven. I enlisted, when eighteen, in 1862, and served three years in the Sixth Minnesota Volunteer Infantry. This town or postoffice I named in 1891.

Mr. Sidney Smith, of Boston, Mass., — who, like myself, was born at Forestville, N. Y., — sends me the only authentic information I have been able to obtain concerning the Masonic affiliations of my relatives, as follows :

Hanover Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons instituted at Forestville, 1824. Charter members and first officers: Luther Thwing, Ezra Puffer, Seth Snow, Albert H. Camp, Walter Griswold, Richard Smith, Ephraim Judson, William Jones, Elijah Robinson. Discontinued 1828.

December, 1849, this Lodge was rechartered. The first officers were: Albert H. Camp, Daniel B. Parsons, William Colville, Rodney B. Smith, Isaac Boss, Marshall Cass, Charles Brown and Elisha Robinson. Isaac Boss was Secretary.

Isaac Boss, mentioned above, was a son of Peter Boss and a cousin of my father.

A newspaper excerpt sent me records the death, on July 31 last, at Berlin, Prussia, of Dr. Julius Robert Bosse, former Prussian Minister of Public Instruction, at the age of sixty-nine years. It is not probable that Dr. Bosse's family had any connection with your family or mine, at least for many generations; but his life and death may well be mentioned here, if only for the similarity in names. His career was a distinguished one.



Mr. Charles F. Boss, of Washington, D. C., has favored me with the following letter. While he indulges somewhat in theories and speculations, he at the same time furnishes many facts of interest and adds to the evidence in favor of the early settlement of the Boss family (or families) in this country and of the extent to which the family name has spread :

1816 FLORIDA AVENUE N. E.,  
WASHINGTON, D. C., August 31, 1901.

Mr. Henry R. Boss, Chicago, Ill.

Dear Sir: I am very glad that you have undertaken to gather the history of the Boss family, and have been greatly interested in reading the proofsheets you have sent me of the work as far as completed.

I have considerable information in relation to our family that I have gathered from books in the Congressional Library, and will endeavor to add to what you already have. The tradition that you speak of—relative to the “three brothers, navigators,”—is the same that has been given to me. I find records of Peter Boss as early as 1680; at that time he commanded the ship *Three Brothers*. I find the family in colonial days in Connecticut, Rhode Island, New York, Pennsylvania and Maryland, but have not found them in Virginia until my own family went there, about 1800. Many members of the family were soldiers in the Revolution.

#### THE NAME.

In olden times, before the use of family names, as you know, it was the custom to call a man by his trade or business. John the smith became John Smith; Thomas the coppersmith became Thomas Coppersmith; William the carpenter became William Carpenter; and so one could go on indefinitely. In thinking of this matter of our family name, it has always been



my belief, in view of the tradition in regard to our ancestors having followed the sea, that one or more generations of them were ship captains or masters, or, as the Dutch would say, Baas or Boss. Perhaps one of them performed some especially valiant deed; and it does not require a great stretch of my imagination to see him standing before the King and hear the latter say to him, "You have been my faithful servant. As a reward, you and yours shall be known as Baas. Arise, Sir Peter." And from that time he would be known as Peter Boss.

#### THE TRADITIONS.

One tradition I have heard is that three brothers came to this country from Holland, in the ship *Three Brothers*, and that they were the ancestors of all in this country bearing the name Boss. The little information I have gathered disproves the latter part of the assertion, as many of the name have arrived at various times and places. As to the first part of the tradition, it seems to me probable that Peter Boss, commander of the ship *Three Brothers*, was the only one of the name who came over in that vessel. One can perceive how easy it would be for a man to say to his son, "My grandfather came here in the ship *Three Brothers*;" and in after years the son might say to *his* son, "My great-grandfather came to this country with his three brothers." This, I think, is possible. We find mention of but one more at this time (1680). In 1690 we find Peter Boss as the author of a book giving an account of a trial in Philadelphia, Pa.; and in the first half of the next century the family is found in Rhode Island. As Peter had trouble with the Quakers in Philadelphia, what is more probable than that he left Philadelphia and went to Rhode Island, where Roger Williams had established a more liberal government so far as religion was concerned?

Another tradition is to the effect that my great-great-grandfather received a letter from the old country telling him of a legacy left him there, and that he promptly tore up the



the letter, saying, "I do not want my children to inherit any money. I want them to work for their living."

#### GERMANY VS. HOLLAND.

I was much surprised to read the letter of my great-uncle, Samuel M. Boss, on page 19 of your work, especially where he says, "I do not think we are related, as my family came from Germany and yours from Holland." While it is true the older generation should be better informed than the younger, it is possible that the former may have been mistaken; for in nothing that I have read concerning this matter do I find any mention of Germany, save a note of the arrival of a ship from Hamburg. Even this one exception may have arisen from the fact that Hamburg was the last European port the vessel stopped at before sailing to America.

I think the term "Dutchman" is confusing and misleading. In our loose manner of speech we apply it to Germans as well as to Hollanders. It is possible my great-uncle had an aversion to being called Holland Dutch, or Low Dutch, as it is sometimes termed even now. I find some people who say, when questioned, "Oh, no, I am not Dutch; I am German. Where I came from there are no Dutch."

I shall continue to believe that the family is of Dutch origin until I find some better proof to the contrary.

#### IN THE ARMY AND NAVY.

The Official Register of Officers and Men of New Jersey in the Revolution, by Stryker, gives the following:

Abram Boss, private, Hunterdon County Militia, Revolutionary War.

Joseph Boss, private, State troops, Revolutionary War.

From Records of Connecticut Men in the Revolution and War of 1812, issued from the Adjutant-General's Office, 1889:

Gideon W. Boss, private, Connecticut Militia. Period of service, August 18, 1813, to September 16, 1813.



From the "Civil and Military List of Rhode Island, 1647-1800," compiled from the records by Joseph Jenks Smith, and published at Providence, in 1900, by Preston & Rounds Co.:

Peter Boss, Ensign, Third North Kingstown Company, Militia of Newport County, May, 1781, and again in May of the succeeding year.

Captain Caleb Boss, Sealer of Duck, May, 1782. (The author does not explain the meaning of "sealer of duck," but I imagine the Captain was an inspector of canvas or duck, and stamped it to show its quality.)

William Boss, Ensign, Westerly County Company, 1782.

June, 1758, John Boss was Chaplain and Surgeon's Mate, and on a subsequent page John Boss is named as Captain of the Third Company, West Greenwich.

Joseph Boss, Ensign, First Regiment, Newport County Fourth Company, June, 1785. On a subsequent page he is mentioned as Captain of this company, and in June, 1794, he is still holding the title.

Peter Boss, Lieutenant, Charlestown, August, 1774.

Benjamin Boss Jr., First Lieutenant, Scituate Light Infantry; afterward Captain of Scituate Hunters, February, 1791, to May, 1794.

Joseph Boss Jr., Captain Fourth Company of Newport and Bristol Brigade, May, 1792, to 1797.

Joseph Boss Jr., Ensign, 1796; also, May, 1797, Artillery of Newport. [The difference in rank would indicate that these were two different men.]

Joseph Boss Jr., Second Major, February, 1798, to June, 1799, First Regiment Newport County.

From "New York in the Revolution, and Colony and State," records arranged by James A. Roberts, Comptroller, I get the following:

Jeremiah Boss, private, Van Rensselaer Regiment, Niles Company, New York State.



Heinrich Boss, Tryon County Associated Exempts.

Joseph Boss, private, First Regiment.

William Boss, Dutchess County Militia (Land Bounty Rights).

From Archives of Maryland, Muster Rolls and other records of service of Maryland troops in the Revolutionary War, published by authority of the State under the direction of the Maryland Historical Society, 1900, I get the following:

October 13, 1781, the following received from Robert Denny such sums as were due them:

Christian Boss, and others, enlisted Fifth Regiment Maryland, August 23, 1781, for period of war; was in the service November, 1788.

From "Citizen Soldiers Who Served at Battle of North Point and Fort McHenry, September 12 and 13, 1814," published by N. Hickman, Baltimore, 1858:

George Boss, private, Eagle Artillery; George J. Brown, Captain.

John Boss, private, Sixth Regiment Maryland Militia; Thomas Shepard, Captain.

From Hammersly's Army and Navy Register:

Hiram Boss, of Massachusetts, cadet in Military Academy, 1818.

Edward Boss appointed Lieutenant in the Navy, June 27, 1799.

Joseph Boss appointed Midshipman March 2, 1799.

From "Census of Pensioners," published by the United States Government:

Ben Boss, born in 1757, living in Rhode Island, 1840, aged 83.

Sarah Boss, born 1758, living in Newport County, R. I., 1840, aged 82.

James Boss, living with Jane Boss, in Dinwiddie County, Va., 1840; born 1760; aged 80.



In the *Historical Register of the Officers of the Continental Army, War of the Revolution, April, 1775–December, 1883*, by F. B. Heitman, published in Washington in 1893, is the following record of one George Boss, "also called Bush," of Pennsylvania:

Captain of Hartley's additional regiment January 13, 1777; regiment designated Eleventh Pennsylvania December 17, 1777; transferred to Sixth Pennsylvania January 17, 1781; transferred to Third Pennsylvania January, 1788, and served to close of war.

From the War Department I have the record of another George Boss from Pennsylvania, as follows:

George Boss served as an Ensign, Adjutant and Lieutenant in the Fourth Pennsylvania Regiment, Revolutionary War. He was commissioned Ensign June 2, 1778; his name is borne with rank of Lieutenant on a list dated August 17, 1780, in a book compiled from the records of the organization mentioned, under the head of "State of Pennsylvania against the United States for Depreciation of Pay of the Army."

The "Archives of Pennsylvania" give the name of Daniel C. Boss of Allegheny County, Pa., private Pennsylvania Militia; pensioner May 13, 1820; died June 7, 1828.

The following is my grandfather's war record, as obtained from the War Department: It is shown by the records that one Abraham Boss served as a private in Captain Martin Kitzmiller's company, Fifty-seventh Regiment (masons and miners) Virginia Militia, in the service at Baltimore, War of 1812. His name appears on the records of that organization, covering the period from August 23 to September 23, 1814, with remarks: "Commencement of service, August 23, 1814; expiration of service, September 16, 1814; term of service, 26 days." As the British entered Washington on August 24th, it is evident that my grandfather came to the defense of this city; and when the Americans were routed he and his company went to Baltimore,



Md., and were engaged in the battle of North Point and the bombardment of Fort McHenry.

#### IN PENNSYLVANIA.

From the "Archives of Pennsylvania" I glean the following:

Thomas Boss, freeman, Chester County, Pa., 1779.

Adam Boss, freeman, Lancaster County, Pa., 1779.

Jacob Boss, Lancaster County, 1782, 2 cattle, tax 18s. 9d.

John and James Boss each had 400 acres surveyed in Northumberland County, Pa., March 15, 1794.

John and Michael Boss were residents of Chester County, 1766-67.

Mathias Boss owned 159 acres, 8 horses, 5 cattle, in Codorus Township, York County, 1781; tax, £2.10.6.

John Boss owned 150 acres in York County, 1780.

Joseph Boss, resident of Philadelphia, 1782.

Nicholas Boss, in Mahanoy Township, Northumberland County, in 1782 owned 50 acres, 2 horses, 2 cattle, 2 sheep; tax, £2.10.5. In 1783 he owned 100 acres, 1 horse, 1 cattle; tax, £7.9.

Friedrich Boss married Wilhelmina Weber, in the German Reformed Church, Philadelphia, July 19, 1794.

#### MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS.

In looking through the Postoffice Department Bluebook for 1897, I find Charlotte K. Boss Postmistress at Boss, Logan County, Ark., and Frank H. Boss Postmaster at Bossdale, Jefferson County, Ky.; both of these offices have since been discontinued. I also find C. S. Boss as Postmaster at Bossburg, Stevens County, Washington. There are a number of people named Boss in the postal service, in different sections of the country, as postmasters, mail messengers, clerks, letter-carriers, etc.

There is a colored man in this city who goes by the name Charles Boss. There is no doubt but that, if one could trace



his family back, it would be found that they were slaves owned by someone of our family name in the South.

In the Congressional Library, in this city, are two copies of a book written by Peter Boss, previously referred to in this letter. The title-page of one of them is as follows:

NEW ENGLAND'S SPIRIT OF PERSECUTION  
Transmitted to  
PENNSYLVANIA  
And the pretended Quaker found persecuting the true  
CHRISTIAN QUAKER  
In the  
T R Y A L  
OF  
Peter Boss, George Keith, Thomas Budd  
and William Bradford  
At the sessions held at Philadelphia the Ninth, Tenth and  
Twelfth Days of December, 1692, giving an account  
of the most Arbitrary Procedure of that Court.  
Printed in the Year 1693.

The title-page of the other copy reads nearly like the above, is described as "Licensed," is dated "Octob 19 1693," and at the foot is the following:

Printed first beyond-Sea and now reprinted in London for Richard Baldwin in Warwick Lane 1693.

From the Civil and Military List of Rhode Island, previously cited:

Peter Boss appointed Justice of the Peace, at Westerly, R. I., May, 1735. Also same name and title at Warwick, 1736; North Kingstown, May, 1738; South Kingstown, May, 1746.

John Boss, Justice of the Peace, West Greenwich, June, 1767.

John L. Boss, one of a Committee on the State of Ferry Wharves, May, 1799.

From "Colonial History of New York:"

Jacob Boss and others were naturalized at New York in 1784, by act of Assembly. [This was requisite to make good the titles to lands bought by the English from the Dutch.]



In a work entitled "Painters, Sculptors, Architects and Engravers," by Clara Erskine Clement, published by James R. Osgood & Co., I find the following:

Abraham Bosse, born at Tours, 1610. He wrote a treatise called "La Manier de graver à L'eau forte et au Burin." He left a good number of plates, principally from his own designs. They are bold and masterly, etched with unusual spirit and freedom.

Yours respectfully,      CHARLES F. BOSS.

Hon. Fernando Jones, of this city, who was born at Forestville, N. Y., eighty-one years ago, called on me recently. Mr. Jones is a remarkably well-preserved man, being as active, bodily and mentally, as most men of half his years. He informed me that three families of the Joneses—not related in any way to one another—settled in or about Forestville about the same time; but he did not tell me *when*. They were all from Connecticut. As a daughter of one of the Joneses, Elizabeth, married Peter F. Boss, son of my great-uncle (see page 33), one may readily guess that the families were acquainted before they settled in Western New York, and even that Uncle Peter Boss emigrated from Connecticut. Should this guess—and it is only a guess—be correct, it would connect my forebears with the New England branches of the family.

---

November 28, 1901.

I have been so long in getting this letter in type that I shall have to begin with a new date. The delay, however, is compensated for by the additional



information that I have obtained, some of which has been incorporated in the pages preceding.

Mr. Charles F. Boss—who is very enthusiastic in gathering information concerning members of the Boss family—has placed me under additional obligations by furnishing me with copies of the following letters, received by him :

UNITED STATES POST OFFICE,  
FLEMINGTON, N. J., October 21, 1901.

Mr. Charles F. Boss.

Dear Sir: Your letter came duly to hand. In reply will say my father came from Ringos, N. J. His father's name was Peter Boss, and he had a brother William. I always understood we were of German descent. My father had three brothers and two sisters—Joseph P. Boss, Henry Boss, John Boss, David B. Boss, Joannah Boss and Rebecca Boss; all are now deceased. I am sorry I do not know more about my people; but we were poor and had to work for a living, and did not pay much attention even to our own people, except to make a living.

I have a brother who lives at Fairview, Ill., who is older than I am, and I think he would remember more than I can.

Yours truly, A. W. Boss, P. M.

STEPHENS CITY, VA., October 28, 1901.

Mr. Charles F. Boss.

Dear Sir: My wife (who was Sarah F. Boss) received a letter from you, dated October 15th, asking for information of the Boss family. She gave it to me to answer, and I have been looking up old papers to see what I could find. I had a clipping from a Baltimore paper giving an account of George Boss, who was one of the Old Defenders, who met in Baltimore once a year; I loaned it to Mrs. Johnson in Leesburg, and it was lost. George Boss was an uncle of my wife's father, S. M.



Boss, so my wife thinks; her father was born in York, Pa., April 3, 1797; his parents moved to Leesburg when he was about six months old; he died in Leesburg August 24, 1872. He married Miss Elizabeth Fox, of Leesburg, b. February 9, 1802, d. June 30, 1874. Their children were:

Mary Rebecca, b. October 10, 1820, living; m. Charles A. Johnson, dead.

Gamaliel Fox, b. December 31, 1822, d. when a boy.

Margaret Ann, b. October 22, 1824, dead; m. William Cline, dead.

Martena Kilgore, b. August 17, 1828, dead; m. Edmond Benedum, living.

Lydia Gibson, b. September 17, 1828, dead; m. Benjamin Franklin Hough, dead.

Sarah Foley, b. March 10, 1830, living; m. Thomas William McArtor (writer of this letter), living.

Caroline Eliza, b. April 25, 1832; d. unmarried.

Elizabeth Jane, b. October 4, 1834, dead; m. Samuel N. Hirst, unknown.

Virginia Alexander, b. February 7, 1838, living; m. John M. Galleher, dead.

Julia Wilson, b. August 15, 1840, living; m. Silas W. Wright, d. July 8, 1896.

James Peter, b. April 10, 1843, unmarried; killed in battle at Gettysburg, July 3, 1863.

I can not give you the dates of the deaths of the above, as the family record was burned in the house of J. Dennis Dunn, near Alexandria, Va., about three years ago. He married Mabel C. Wright, a daughter of Julia W. (Boss) Wright.

Grandfather Peter Boss moved from York, Pa., to Leesburg, Va., in 1797. He was a baker; dates of birth and death unknown to me. His wife's name was Rebecca; dates unknown. They were both buried in the old stone M. E. church yard in Leesburg; no tombstones.

In the *Genius of Liberty*, published at Leesburg, under date of July 24, 1829, appeared this notice: "At the County



Court of Loudon, held June 12, 1829, Lydia Boss, John Randolph Boss, Peter Gibson Boss, Lydia Louisa Boss, Margaret Eliza Boss and Elizabeth Fox Boss, plaintiffs," in a suit *versus* Samuel M. Boss and Peter Boss, and it was stated that Peter Boss was not an inhabitant of this country. Neither my wife nor her sister, Mrs. Julia W. Wright, knows anything about the above-named persons, some of whose names are very similar to S. M. Boss' family names.

In the *American Manufacturer* dated June 19, 1841, published at Pittsburg, Pa., mention is made of Daniel C. Boss, a member of the Pittsburg Blues, wounded in battle at Fort Meigs, May 5, 1813.

I was in Mechanicsburg, Pa., about twelve years ago, and saw the name Boss over the door of a photographer. I went in and had a long talk with him. I, as well as he, was convinced that he belonged to the same family. He was much like S. M. Boss in his quick movements. I do not remember his given name. Respectfully yours,

T. W. McARTOR.

I have received the following interesting letter from Mr. Homer B. Boss, of Binghamton, situated in southern central New York. It was written at the instance of my only surviving brother, my younger brother having died in infancy, a few days previous to the death of my father:

BINGHAMTON, N. Y., November 10, 1900.

Mr. Henry R. Boss.

My Dear Sir: I received a letter, a few days ago, from William E. Boss, Bath, N. Y., requesting my aid in helping to get statistics of the Boss family. I fortunately have a record back as far as my great-grandfather, which I gladly furnish you. It is as follows:

Philip Boss, b. January 29, 1743, d. March 10, 1807; m.



Dorcas James, b. May 16, 1746, d. February 16, 1825. I have no knowledge of brothers or sisters.

Children of above:

John Boss, b. October 15, 1770, d. March 8, 1836; m. Elizabeth Stanton, b. June 2, 1771, d. December 17, 1824. I have no knowledge of brothers or sisters.

Children of above:

Philip Boss, b. February 14, 1795; d. April 30, 1879.

Electa Boss, b. September 29, 1797; d. March 24, 1879.

Ela W. Boss, b. June 11, 1800; d. December 15, 1882.

John Boss Jr., b. August 14, 1802; d. September 2, 1855.

Benjamin B. Boss, b. April 30, 1805; d. December 8, 1826.

Eason Boss, b. September 8, 1807; d. December 5, 1851.

Alfred Boss, b. April 29, 1810; d. November 4, 1864.

Bradley Boss, b. June 14, 1812; now living at Kennedy, Chautauqua County, N. Y.

William H. Boss, b. June 12, 1814; d. October 21, 1834.

Eliza V. Boss, b. November 6, 1818; d. August 15, 1891.

Children of Ela W. Boss, whose wife was Louisa Butler, b. February 23, 1802; d. February 3, 1895:

Almira Eliz. Boss, b. August 11, 1822; d. October 19, 1823.

Sally Jane Boss, b. June 8, 1824; d. August 25, 1857.

Henry W. Boss, b. August 16, 1827; now living at Binghamton, N. Y.

Helen M. Boss, b. January 1, 1832; now Mrs. Holladay, living at Fabius, N. Y.

John Boss, b. March 14, 1834; d. March 7, 1835.

Homer B. Boss, b. February 14, 1836; now living at Binghamton, N. Y.

Louisa M. Boss, b. June 10, 1838; now Mrs. Larrabee, living at Binghamton, N. Y.

Francis E. Boss, b. September 11, 1840; d. September 18, 1846.

Morris E. Boss, b. April 8, 1843; d. June 14, 1900.



Charles W. Boss, b. April 7, 1845; now living at Binghamton, N. Y.

The only male child living of above family (the children of Ela W. Boss) is Harry W. Boss, son of Charles W. Boss, born, I think, in 1869.

I have reason to believe your great-grandfather, William Boss, and my great-grandfather might have been brothers. My father was born in Herkimer County, this State, in 1800. He lived in Orleans County in 1825. We are all, no doubt, from the same ancestors. There are a few Bosses in New York City; one or two in Buffalo. We—my brothers and sisters—are all there are in this part of the country. There is a family in Providence, R. I., one of whom has been here; they manufacture the "Boss Axle Washer."

Yours very truly,

HOMER B. BOSS.

Your fotograf came duly to hand, and I have had it reproduced in halftone for publication in this work. It has a decided "Boss look" about it; indeed, when I handed it to my wife for her inspection, she at once said, "Why, that looks like the Bosses." There is something about your face, especially the upper part of it, which calls up a mental composit picture of our family; that is, a curve here reminds of one member, while another curve there recalls a vision of another member. Not that all the Bosses we know look alike; quite the contrary. Some have had full, round faces; some have been square-jawed, while others have been very spare in feature. But there is an undefinable something about a number of the members of the family which marks them as belonging to the same race. Possibly, if we had accurate fotografas of representatives of the various generations existing from



the time of the adoption of the surname, we might be able to trace a family likeness thru all of them, even tho it be true, as the ethnologists tell us, that climatic and other influences make great changes in racial characteristics.

I have been surprised, while making researches concerning the Boss Family, to learn how numerous are the bearers of the name and how widely they are spread in the various States of the Union. One can hardly look in the directory of an important town in the country without finding recorded there the names of a greater or less number of the Bosses. Our surprise is diminished, however, when we observe the large families which some of our name have been the progenitors of. The few lists which I have given in this work show much more than the average number of children in a family. If this volume meets with the reception that I think it deserves, so that I may be enabled to get out one or more additional volumes, I hope to include in it or them many more like lists.

The christian names in the lists above referred to fail to show any markt similarity among those in the different branches of the family in this country; but that does not necessarily indicate lack of relationship between them. The "good old Scotch custom" that you refer to on page 28 has had little vogue in this country. In many cases that have come under my observation names have been conferred upon children in honor of friends of the family, or of distinguisht individuals, rather than members of their own fami-



lies. As an illustration of the differences in christian names, see the lists of children of my grandfather and my great-uncle and those given by Mr. George B. Boss, of Milton, Wis., and Mr. Homer B. Boss, of Binghamton, N. Y.

Miss Jennie H. Boss, of Forestville, N. Y., writes me concerning the children of her great-grandfather, Peter Boss, and gives me the following list of them. I do not think this list is as reliable as that given on pages 33 and 34, for it makes no mention of Maria (Boss) Willoughby, whom I knew when I was a very young boy. The addition of the name of William Boss is undoubtedly correct:

Elijah [Eliza?] Boss, b. March 28, 1791.

Polly Boss, b. June 11, 1794.

Isaac Boss, b. September 4, 1797.

Ebenezer Boss, b. November 7, 1799.

Amy Boss, b. January 20, 1802.

Peter F. Boss, b. July 4, 1804.

George W. Boss, b. July 4, 1806; m. Maryette Green, b. June 31, 1813.

Alvin Boss, b. May 20, 1808.

William Boss, b. January 4, 1811; d. when young.

Children of George W. and Maryette Boss:

Marjorie Boss, b. February 22, 1834; now Mrs. Merritt Stillson, Irving, Mich.

Ann Boss, b. June 5, 1836.

Edgar Boss, b. August 5, 1839; m. Hester Snow, b. August 17, 1839.

Margaret Boss, b. December 3, 1842.

Hattie Boss, b. April 12, 1845; now Mrs. Hattie Town, Hamlet, N. Y.



Mariah Boss, b. July 23, 1847.

Elizabeth Boss, b. May 7, 1849.

G. Emery Boss, b. June 23, 1856; d. when he was about five years old.

Children of Edgar and Hester Boss:

Arthur S. Boss, b. April 17, 1861.

George S. Boss, b. June 15, 1863.

Carrie Boss Dennison, b. August 24, 1866.

Samuel Boss, b. November 16, 1869.

Mary Boss Tenny, b. April 16, 1874.

Jennie H. Boss, b. December 10, 1878.

In sending me a fotograf of the late Samuel M. Boss, reproduced in this book, Mr. T. W. McArtor writes from Stephens City, Va., as follows :

I will give you an account of how I came to have his foto. The family had often tried to get him to have it taken, but he never had time or patience to sit still that long, so I went to a fotografer (who was a new beginner at the business), and told him to have everything ready and I would get Mr. Boss to come in. After a good deal of persuasion I got him there, and when the artist saw the picture he said it was not very good and he would take another. After Mr. B. had gone home I told the artist not to destroy this one until we got another; but I never could get him to go again, and this is the only picture of him that was ever taken. Do not take the dark spot on the chin for a goatee; he never wore a beard or a mustache.

Samuel M. Boss was the quickest man, in all his movements, you ever saw, and his children inherit this trait. My wife, who will be seventy-two next 10th of March, walks off as briakly as a young girl.

A few years ago I was in Mechanicsburg, Pa. I saw the name Boss over a foto gallery. I went in and talked with the artist. I knew from his quick movements that he was a Boss.



He had a relative named Peter; it seems to be a family name. In appearance this Mechanicsburg man favors you, to the best of my recollection of him; it has been about thirteen years since I saw him.

Tho I have strenuously endeavored to keep this book free from typographical errors, I find that two have crept in. On page 46, first line of last paragraph, "Poece" appears for "Boece." On page 66, under "South Kingstown, R. I.," the first date given should be 1745 instead of 1845. Possibly there are other errors; but I have not been able to find them.

As I am concluding this letter I am learning of several sources from which I hope, sometime, to get information of much value and interest. If my pecuniary circumstances would permit I would extend this volume considerably beyond its present limits. I am compelled, however, to close up with this letter, hoping that what is here printed may awaken a wider and deeper interest in the matter, so that, in the near future, I may be enabled to extend the work to two or more volumes, and thus preserve an authentic and nearly complete record of the Boss Family.

The portraits given herewith will give opportunity for comparison and study. I tried to obtain more of them, but was unable to do so.

Trusting that our labors are not yet completed, and that life and health may be spared for us to do much more in this direction, I am

Yours very truly, HENRY R. BOSS.



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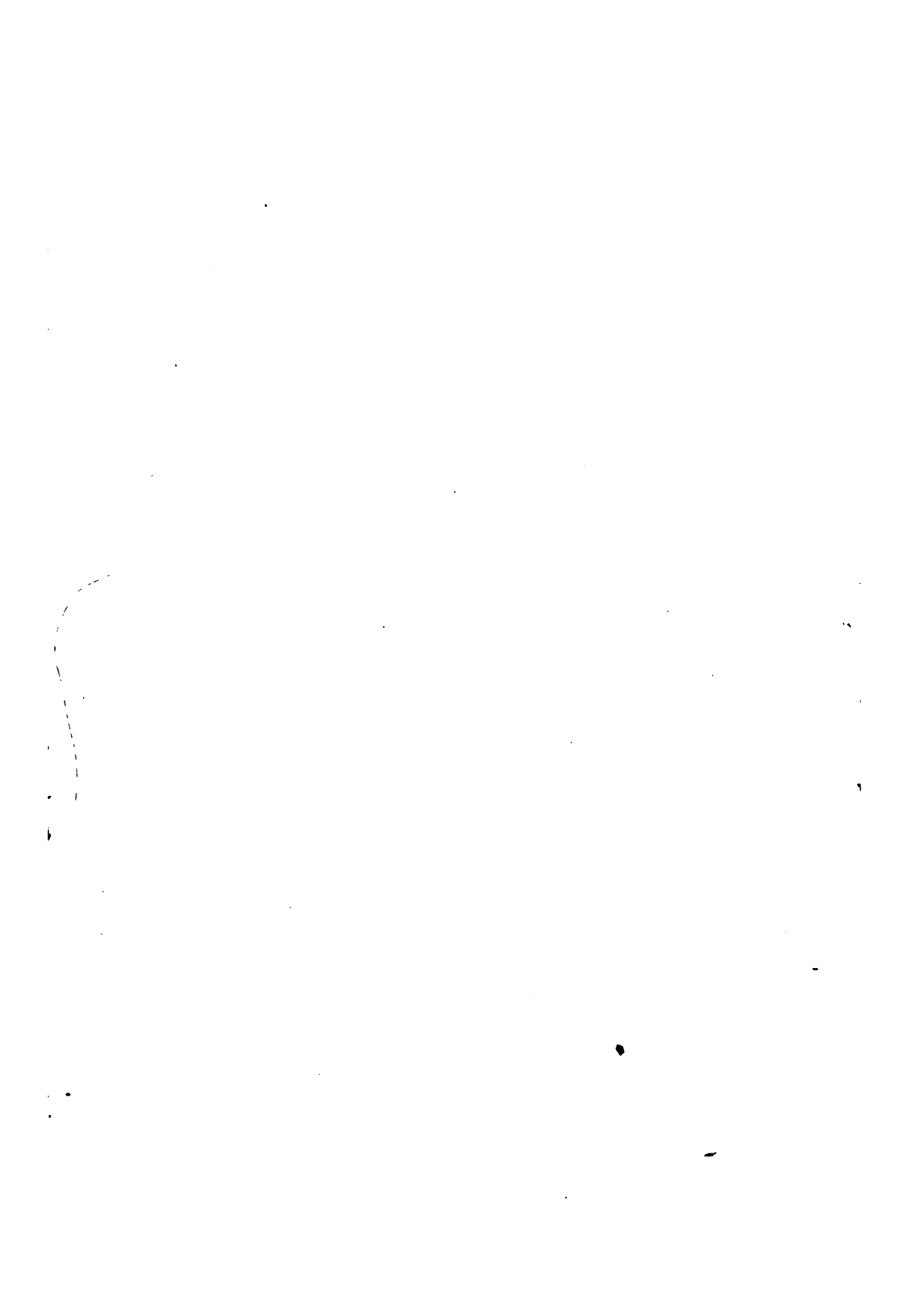
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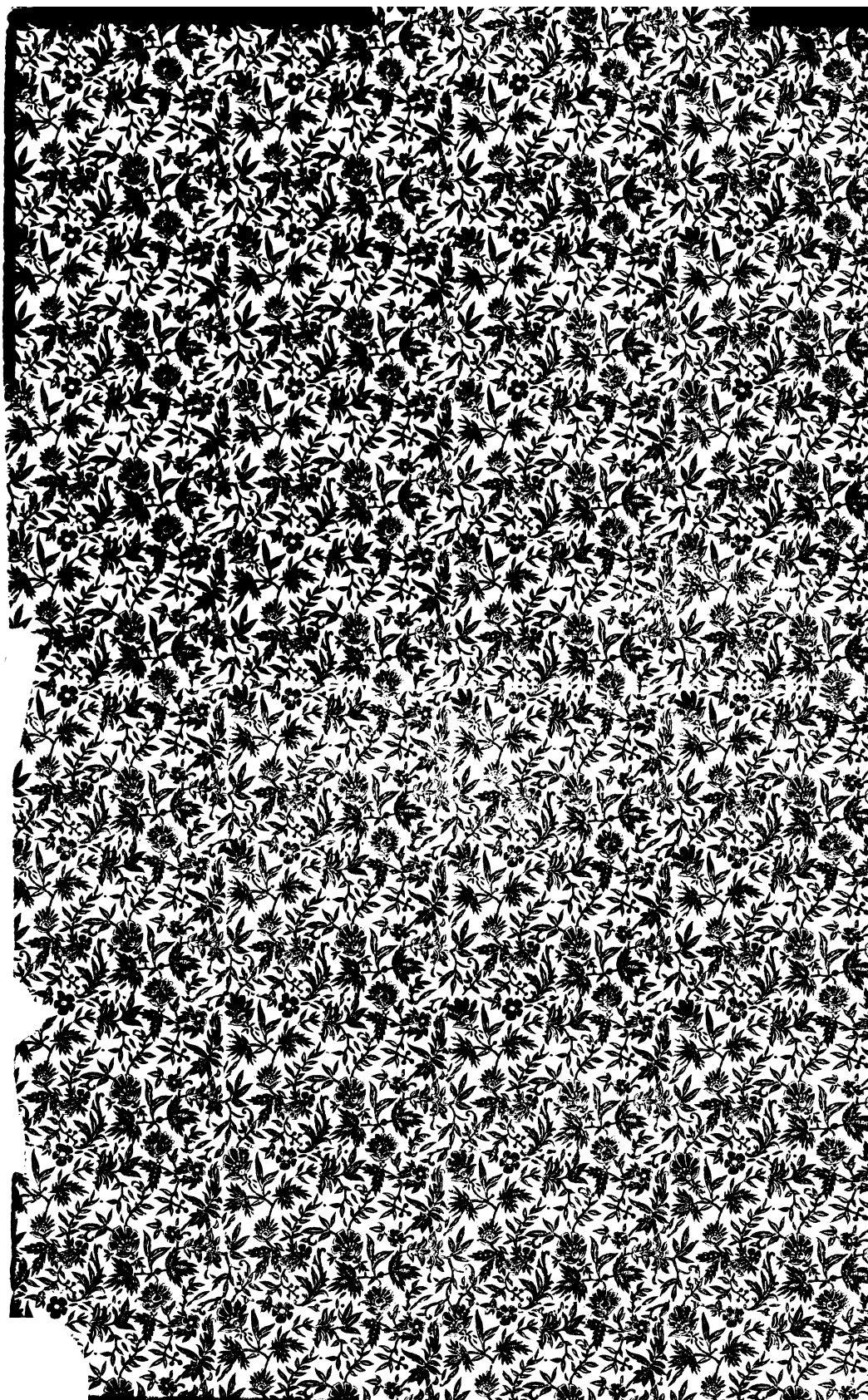




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